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## ABSTRACT

This report describes activities undertaken during Phase I of a two-year project sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education to prepare, evaluate, and distribute a print-based curriculum which will encourage the development of critical television viewing skills in teenagers, and to develop television viewing skills guides and workshops for parents and educators. Organized according to the five major tasks proposed for the first phase, the report contains sections on: (1) curriculum development, including discussions of preliminary activities, materials development, and materials revision; (2) evaluation and field-testing of the curriculum, with a consideration of the formative evaluation plan prepared for the project by the Educational Testing Service (ETS); (3) planning for the printing and distribution of the curriculum materials; (4) development of television viewing workshops for parents and teachers; and (5) management and reporting during the project. Among the many items appended are bibliographies on critical television viewing skills for teachers, parents, and students; a filmography on critical television viewing; the ETS evaluation plan; press releases and press clippings relating to the project; and materials for teachers and parents from a television viewing workshop held in Flint, Michigan. (Author/JL)

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FINAL REPORT

CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM

Contract #300-78-0495

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin

October 10, 1979



**FAR WEST LABORATORY**  
FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT  
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## FINAL REPORT

### Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum Project High School Level

#### Introduction

This report details activities accomplished by the "Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum at the Secondary Level" project (Contract #300-78-0495) at Far West Laboratory (FWL), San Francisco, during Phase I from October 1, 1978-September 30, 1979. The project was established to develop, evaluate, and distribute a print-based curriculum consisting of a student guide, teacher guide and family guide which will encourage development of critical television viewing skills in high school students; and to develop and conduct critical television viewing skills workshops for parents, community organization leaders, teachers, and other educators. During Phase I of the two year project, Far West Laboratory subcontracted with the Radio and Television for Learning Office at WGBH to create the curriculum materials based upon a model developed at FWL and with Educational Testing Service (ETS) to conduct a formative review of the curriculum.

This report is organized according to the five major tasks proposed for Phase I of the project:

1. Curriculum Development
2. Field-Testing of the Curriculum
3. Printing and Distribution Planning
4. Workshop Development
5. Management and Reporting.

The scope of work for Phase II (October 1, 1979 - September 30, 1980) of the

project includes printing and distribution of the curriculum and conducting of ten workshops for educators and ten workshops for parents and community leaders. A detailed description of these tasks may be found in "Proposal--Critical Television Viewing Skills Curricula for High School Students: Training and Distribution," August 29, 1979.

#### TASK 1: Curriculum Development

Curriculum development began at Far West Laboratory as an interactive four-phase effort. Phase I consisted of a literature review and synthesis which resulted in the development of a preliminary curriculum model. Phase II consisted of consultation with members of the target audience via a Student Panel and Curriculum Review Board Mini-Conference which resulted in the identification of critical television viewing skills and refinement of the curriculum model. Phase III consisted of materials development, and Phase IV, revision of the curriculum materials based upon the formative review of the curriculum materials conducted by ETS (see Task 2 below) and review of the materials by the Student Panel of the Curriculum Review Board.

#### Curriculum Development: Phase I

Phase I began with a literature review covering the following topics:

- a. previous curriculum attempts at developing critical television viewing skills;
- b. the effects of television on adolescents;
- c. the impact of television on families and family relationships;
- d. the organization, structure and "art" of television;
- e. public concerns about television and its effects.

The literature review resulted in a bibliography of resources for teachers at



all grade levels which was submitted to USOE for distribution to other contractors. This bibliography may be found in Appendix A. Portions of the bibliography are included in the Teacher Guide and a revised version is included in the workshop materials for families and educators (see Appendix D).

In addition to a search for printed resources in these topic areas, FWL staff interviewed a number of individuals and organizations concerned with the development of critical television viewing skills. These interviews included discussions with

- Paul Kaufman, Stanford University. A former television producer now in the Engineering-Economics Department at Stanford, Mr. Kaufman is developing research approaches to developing critical visual literacy skills in students;
- Mr. Bill Young, National Parent Teacher Association, Chicago. Mr. Young is developing a critical television viewing skills curriculum for K-12 which is expected to be completed over a five-year period. He has been heavily involved in the design of the national PTA monitoring of television programs;
- Drs. Dorothy and Jerome Singer, Yale University. Drs. Singer have developed a critical television viewing skills curriculum for elementary school students under a grant from the American Broadcasting Co.;
- Mr. Ed Stanley, Teachers Guides to Television, New York. Mr. Stanley is president of this organization which publishes teachers' guides to major commercial television programs and which is developing television literacy workshops in conjunction with the National Broadcasting Co.;
- Ms. Lynn Williams, CBS Reading Program, New York. The CBS Reading Program publishes teachers' guides and scripts to major CBS programs in local newspapers;

- Ms. Shirley Whipple-Struchen, Media Action Research Center, United Methodist Church, New York. MARC has developed the Television Awareness Training workshop course to teach critical television viewing skills to adults;
- Ms. Lauren Katzowitz, EXXON Corporation, New York. EXXON has been heavily involved in the funding of teachers' guides to major public television series;
- Ron Curtis, Southwest Iowa Learning Center and developer of Media Now, a laboratory course in the mass media;
- Ms. Susan DeMersseman-Warren, Committee on Children's Television, San Francisco.

Based on the findings of the literature review and interviews, a preliminary course outline for the high school level briefly detailing major content areas, student learning goals and sample activities was developed and shared with the Curriculum Review Board. This initial course model, built around ten learning units, may be found in Appendix A.

#### Curriculum Development: Phase II

Concurrent with the development of the curriculum model, a Student Panel was established at Far West Laboratory. Nine high school students from seven Bay Area high schools were selected to serve on the Panel. The Panel members were selected based upon the recommendation of building principals who were asked to nominate students based on grade level, sex, ethnic background and ability to interact comfortably in a group setting. Schools were selected from a variety of Bay Area communities representing both urban and suburban locations and a variety of ethnic mixes. Appendix A contains a list of the nine students selected for membership in the Student Panel.

The Student Panel members attended a one-day meeting at Far West Laboratory on October 17, 1978. The purposes of the Student Panel meeting were twofold: 1) to help FWL staff assess how sophisticated high school students are about television; and 2) to provide student input in the design of the curriculum.

At the meeting, the students viewed two television programs -- one, a top-ranked situation comedy and the other a local evening magazine format show. These programs were selected because of their popularity, contrasting formats, and availability for videotaping. During the Student Panel meeting, the students viewed these programs in small groups and discussed their reactions to and evaluations of the programs. Each student also filled out a reaction sheet to the programs which asked what she/he liked and disliked about the program and whom she/he believed the intended audience for the program to be. This reaction sheet may be found in Appendix A. Since one purpose of the Student Panel meeting was to give FWL staff an opportunity to assess the degree of sophistication used by high school students in watching television programs, staff posed a number of probing questions to the students during these discussions.

During the afternoon session, students were asked to generate a list of critical television viewing skills and content areas they felt it was important for the curriculum to address. This list appears in the report of the Student Panel meeting contained in Appendix A. The Student Panel also elected one member, Alice Dominici, to represent their views at the Curriculum Mini-Conference.

The results of the Student Panel Meeting were mailed to the six-member Parent/Teacher Panel and four expert consultants who attended a Curriculum Mini-Conference at FWL on October 30-31, 1978. In preparation for the Conference,



these participants also received a proposed course outline and a set of issues, focused primarily on curriculum scope and materials formatting, for Curriculum Review Board consideration. The agenda for the Curriculum Mini-Conference, proposed curriculum, and set of issues may be found in Appendix A.

USOE project monitors and directors of the other three Critical Television Viewing Skills curriculum projects were also invited to attend the Mini-Conference in the hope that a more coordinated curriculum development effort across projects could occur. Unfortunately, restrictions in travel budgets did not permit their attendance.

During the Curriculum Mini-Conference, the course outline prepared by FWL was reviewed and some changes were recommended. The participants met in small groups as teachers, parents, and content consultants to identify major curriculum concerns and list critical television viewing skills. Each small group reported back to the Conference as a whole on their findings. The master lists of critical viewing skills proposed at the Mini-Conference may be found in the report of the Curriculum Mini-Conference contained in Appendix A.

The Curriculum Mini-Conference participants also addressed formatting and distribution questions, and a number of important suggestions such as the advisability of consumable materials were made by teachers and parents. The Curriculum Mini-Conference Report which may be found in Appendix A outlines the major concerns regarding formatting and marketing presented at the meeting.

### Materials Development: Phase III

Immediately following the Curriculum Mini-Conference, FWL, WGBH, and ETS met to reformulate the curriculum based on the results of Curriculum Review Board and consultant input. The results of this meeting may be found in Appendix A in a paper entitled, "A CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, Introduction."

### Classroom Materials

The classroom materials consist of a student textbook, teacher guide, and set of thermofax masters. Together, they comprise a complete curriculum, ideally designed to be offered as a one-semester elective course. As a complete curriculum, in-class activities and homework assignments for each instructional day are recommended to the teacher. In addition, the teacher guide will highlight "core" readings and activities for the teacher who does not wish or is not able to devote a full semester to the curriculum.

The student textbook is estimated at approximately 180 pages of text, divided into seven units:

1. You and Television
2. The Television Industry
3. Programs and Production
4. Selling
5. That's the Way It Is?
6. The Television Environment
7. A Saving Radiance?

A brief description of each unit may be found in Appendix A. A draft manuscript of all curriculum materials was submitted to USOE in July, 1979.

Each of the seven units contains expository prose on the topic, associated individual, small group and class activities which are interspersed throughout the text and follow given sub-topics, and additional readings. These readings are considered integral to the curriculum rather than supplementary. They include script segments, original interviews with actors, television executives, creators, and commentators, and materials reprinted from existing materials which present additional information or represent a point of view.

The student text will be designed in three-column format with two full columns of text per page and the third column devoted to photographs, definitions of television terms, and activities. Each page will contain a photograph or graphics to illustrate the concepts presented in the accompanying text.

The teacher materials consist of the teacher guide and thermofax masters. The teacher guide begins with an introductory essay stressing the goals and importance of the curriculum. Next is a section of preparatory activities for the teachers such as where to write for network annual reports, how to order films, arrange for field trips, etc. Each unit in the student textbook is introduced with a description which informs the teacher which critical viewing skills are addressed by the unit and student learning objectives. For each unit, recommended lesson plans indicating the sequence of readings, activities, and thermofaxes will be included. Finally, the teacher guide includes a list of additional resources such as bibliography, audio-visual resources, information about teacher guides to particular programs, etc.

The thermofax masters can be re-used numerous times and are included to permit "workbook"-type activities such as logging and scripting exercises. Thermofax masters are included in the curriculum package for two reasons: 1) they avoid



the need for consumable student materials that need to be re-ordered each year, hence making the curriculum more attractive to school districts for purchase; and 2) of all reproduction facilities available to teachers, it is believed that thermofax technology is most widely available.

Original projections were for completion of the student and teacher materials by February, 1979. As the student text expanded beyond its originally proposed scope, the length of time for completion similarly expanded and a final set of draft classroom materials were completed in May, 1979. WGBH, which holds the materials development subcontract, submitted several preliminary draft versions of each unit to FWL for review. FWL reviewed each unit in depth and made appropriate suggestions for revisions. FWL also invited three of the nine Student Panel members to individually review some initial draft units to assure the readability and appeal of the material. On February 9-11, 1979, FWL Project Director Donna Lloyd-Kolkin met with WGBH project staff in Boston to review the drafts of each unit in detail. Based on the results of this meeting, WGBH prepared a subsequent draft of each unit and met with Lloyd-Kolkin at FWL in San Francisco between March 19-23, 1979 for a final review of each unit, preparatory to the final drafts of each student unit and the teacher guide.

In addition to reviewing and drafting of the classroom materials, FWL and WGBH worked together to secure permissions to use print and photographic materials for the student text. WGBH compiled a list of readings and publications sources for the curriculum. FWL wrote for permission to reprint, is maintaining a file of permissions granted and informing WGBH of necessary changes and credits to be included in the text. WGBH also compiled a collection of recommended photographs and text references which it submitted to FWL; FWL, in turn, undertook

the task of obtaining permissions to use these photographic materials.

All permissions to reprint articles, excerpts from articles, and brief quotes in the curriculum text are now on file at FWL. About 75% of photographic permissions have been obtained; the remaining require further correspondence to secure clearance from individuals in the photographs. Approval from all persons interviewed (as explained below) has been obtained. For the family guide, all requests have been approved.

WGBH interviewed more than one dozen persons by telephone and in person. These interviewees include actor Richard Thomas (The Waltons), TV news executive Don Hewitt (60 Minutes), producers Barbara Searles (Days of Our Lives) and Susan Harris (Soap), "commentators" George Gerbner and Fred Friendly, and TV camera-men and lighting technicians. Interviews are included as readings in the student text. WGBH edited the interview, and each interviewee was given the edited version to be included in the text and asked to grant written permission and approval.

During the first quarter of the project, FWL prepared a filmography of films which might be useful to recommend to teachers as part of the curriculum. FWL previewed each film which is recommended in the teacher guide. FWL refined the filmography which was shared in December, 1978 with other Critical Television Viewing Skills projects; it may be found in Appendix A, and will be included in the workshop materials for educators (see Task 3).

### Family Guide

Concurrent with development of the classroom materials, WGBH and FWL explored options for the family guide and how best to present critical television viewing information to families with teenagers. A major criteria in evaluating formats and options for the family guide was that the publication needed to be short, interesting and not require the family to devote inordinate amounts of time or effort to the guide.

Several ideas were explored. The most promising for some time was to conduct in-depth interviews with a variety of family types (single parent families, extended families, rural families, inner city families, etc.) across the nation, edit the material and develop what we believed would be the first publication of real people talking about the role of television in their lives, the issues or problems in the family created by television and ways to resolve these issues. Further discussion of the feasibility of this approach, however, resulted in a decision that it was not possible to produce such a publication within the budgetary limits of the project.

Another approach considered was to develop a short (perhaps 35 pages) publication in question and answer format, e.g., "What is television telling my children about sex?" While this publication might be of broad general interest to individuals and families with children of all ages, the particular emphasis on families with adolescent children would be derived by its organization around issues that are of particular interest to parents of teenagers and the teens themselves. For example, it is a safe bet that the teenage years are filled with decision-making about career and school choices. Television does present a great deal of information -- sometimes erroneous -- about desirable career choices. How to handle sexual relations is another important issue to



adolescents and parents of adolescents and "too much sex" on TV is currently a topic of public debate. The research base for this publication would have come from two sources: first, information about the particular concerns of parents of teenagers and teenagers themselves would have been researched by FWL using available information from national polls, parenting studies, etc. to inform decisions about which topics to address. Secondly, the information presented in the guide was to be research-based; if sex is an important concern of parents and teens, what does the research tell us about sex on television? and about people's attitudes toward sex on television?

In April, 1979, the Parent-Teacher Panel of the Curriculum Review Board were contacted by mail and asked to consider topics for the family guide. A copy of the letter and directions to the Parent-Teacher Panel may be found in Appendix A. Five of the six Panel members responded by mail and their recommendations were transmitted to WGBH for assistance in preparing the family guide.

In May, 1979, Project Director Donna Lloyd-Kolkin met with WGBH staff in Boston to review a final design for the family guide. Also attending that meeting was consultant Elizabeth Conley who has extensive experience working with television to explore inter-generational values and conflicts.

At that meeting, three approaches to the family guide were reviewed:

1. intensive case studies with five families to allow real people to talk about the role of television in their family lives and ways they approached this issue;
2. a guide organized around topics important to teenagers and their parents such as sex, career choices, drugs, and violence with

- information about what television teaches us about those topics;
3. a guide of short enjoyable activities which correspond to the material presented in the classroom curriculum materials.

After careful consideration of these possibilities, the third approach was selected. The first approach was rejected by FWL and WGBH because it was too costly to undertake and do well; the second approach was also rejected because research about television content on these issues was incomplete and often value-laden. The third approach was chosen because 1) it provided an integrity between the classroom and family materials; 2) it was deemed the approach most likely to be effective in engaging the interest of families which include adolescents; and 3) it was cost-effective.

The critical television viewing skills to be addressed by the family guide therefore include the four skills established for the classroom materials:

1. the ability to evaluate and manage one's own television viewing behavior;
2. the ability to question the reality of television programs;
3. the ability to recognize the arguments employed on television and to counterargue;
4. the ability to recognize the effects of television on one's own life.

In addition, a fifth goal -- to raise awareness among families that television can be an effective mechanism to enhance family communication -- was also established for the family guide.

Subsequent to this meeting, WGBH prepared a draft of the family guide for FWL

review. Upon FWL review and comments from the Student Panel meeting in June, 1979, WGBH revised the family guide. This revision included adding a section to the guide which addresses the issues of concern to parents and teenagers such as sex role representation, career choices, etc.

#### Revision of Curriculum Materials: Phase IV

Task 2 (below) describes the type of formative review process undertaken by subcontractor Educational Testing Service to provide feedback to FWL and WGBH about the utility, feasibility, and quality of the curriculum materials for classroom and families. In addition, during the week of June 18-22, 1979, FWL reconvened its Student Panel to review the classroom curriculum materials in depth. The materials appeared to work very well with this group, and minutes of that meeting and suggestions for revision of the curriculum proposed by the Student Panel may be found in Appendix A.

USOE also informally provided FWL with feedback about the curriculum materials provided by its panel of proposal reviewers who read the materials as part of their review of Phase II proposals.

Major concerns of the adults who reviewed the materials centered on the readability of the materials for low reading ability students and the implementability of the curriculum in situations where a full-semester elective course was not feasible.

Therefore, upon receipt of these varied forms of target audience input, FWL and WGBH began revision of the curriculum materials. In September, 1979, Donna Lloyd-Kolkin and Debra Lieberman of FWL met in Boston with writer Ned White.



The following recommendations for revision of the curriculum were adopted:

Student Guide

1. Put vocabulary (TV-related words only) in bold type indicating they may be found in a glossary.
2. Prepare glossary.
3. Add sub-headings of each chapter to Table of Contents.
4. Number the readings and activities within each unit.
5. Drop the following readings:

Unit 1: There Need Be No Apology, No Lament  
In Conversation with George Gerbner

TELEVISION TIME LINE

Unit 2: Changes Proposed  
Carnegie II: A New Blueprint for Tomorrow's System

Unit 3: ABC's Quarter Million Dollar Man Performs Heroics Too  
In Conversation with Larry LeCain  
TV's Caesar Railored to Small Screen  
In Conversation with Chas Norton  
Jay Sandrich: The Best There Is  
Lassie: The First 25 Shots from "The Challenge"

Unit 4: Subtle Commercial Messages Examined

Unit 5: A Fickle Affront to the First Amendment  
Prime Time President  
Murrow vs. McCarthy  
THE TUNNEL: An Unusual Expense Account  
Local Stations: Cross Ownership

Unit 6: Casting for TV Parts. The Anatomy of Social Typing  
Women's Real Roles Don't Show Up On TV. SAG  
In Conversation with Barbara Searles  
In Conversation with Richard Thomas, Part II

Unit 7: Satellite Spurs Growth of Cable TV  
A New Age of Cultural Programming on TV

APPENDIX: THE NAB BROADCASTERS' CODE (Excerpts)

6. The following readings will be edited to make them shorter:

Unit 1: In Conversation with Les Brown  
In Conversation with Fred Friendly

Unit 4: In Conversation with Jim Fitts

Unit 5: In Conversation with Don Hewitt

Unit 6: Television, Violence and the Public Interest  
In Conversation with Susan Harris  
In Conversation with Ronald Gold and Ginny Vida

7. In Unit 2, the dropped reading entitled "Carnegie II: A New Blueprint for Tomorrow's System," will be replaced with another reading about public television.
8. In Unit 1, the chart on page 5 will be simplified by omitting the time periods listed on the left side of it. The time periods will be represented in four separate graphs, one for each time period, showing the numbers of hours each age group watches in that time period.
9. In Unit 6, page 256, the two pie diagrams will be drawn with each group in the same area of the circle. For example, majority males should be positioned on the right hand side of both circles.
10. The graphics will be made clearer on charts on pages 257 and 260.
11. A copy editor will copy the text material with the purpose of reducing the reading level.

#### Teacher Guide

1. Add a matrix to introduction showing subject matter by curriculum parts to encourage teachers to consider using parts of the book, if use of the entire book/semester course is not possible.
2. Suggesting optional non-print activities.
3. Adding discussion questions for each day's work to assist teachers in leading class discussions and making a maximum use of activities and worksheets.
4. Renumber days in curriculum by unit rather than as a one-semester course.
5. Add name, number, and page in student text where activities appear for teacher's easy reference.
6. Add additional bibliographic references to each unit.

In addition to these changes, smaller changes were made in various student activities and worksheets within the text, using the ETS formative review report as guidance.

A revised schedule for completion of the classroom materials was established between FWL and WGBH with plans for WGBH to submit a full set of camera-ready mechanicals no later than January 1, 1980.

The family guide was revised in a similar way by FWL and WGBH, using the ETS report on the family guide review as a guide. The revised family guide may be found in Appendix A. In October, 1979, it will be submitted to USOE for final approval before it is typeset and sent to the printer. (See Task 3, Printing and Distribution below.)

#### TASK 2: Field-Testing of the Curriculum

ETS subcontractor evaluators Patricia Wheeler and Theresa Strand attended the Curriculum Mini-Conference at Far West Laboratory on October 30-31, 1978. They also participated in subsequent meetings between FWL and WGBH to further define the scope and content of the curriculum materials.

Far West Laboratory's original proposal to USOE (August, 1978) called for a two-phase evaluation effort to occur during both Phase I and Phase II. This proposed plan called for a limited formative evaluation during Phase I, including observation by WGBH of the materials used in a classroom in Boston and interviews by Educational Testing Service, the evaluation subcontractor, with a small sample of teachers, students, administrators, and parents across the country. Full scale field testing was to occur during Phase II. Hence, ETS had available a relatively small evaluation budget for Phase I which was to have been expanded during Phase II. During the first quarter of Phase I, it became apparent that this plan would not be put into effect for a variety



of reasons and planning for an appropriate field test began anew.

At the end of November, 1978, USOE indicated that the evaluation plan contained in FWL's proposal needed to be expanded to a more complete evaluation effort during Phase I. This conversation, which occurred during a tele-conference call, also indicated that instruments, proposed by FWL to be submitted in March, 1979 following completion of the curriculum materials and in time for OMB clearance procedures to allow a summative evaluation during Phase II, needed to be submitted earlier to permit USOE review prior to the formative evaluation. Project Director Lloyd-Kolkin agreed to submit instruments for formative evaluation procedures by January 1, 1979.

In response to USOE's concern for a more comprehensive, formative evaluation during Phase I, on December 7, 1978, ETS Evaluator Pat Wheeler and Lloyd-Kolkin met to discuss in more detail the formative evaluation effort required. A plan for formative evaluation, more extensive than that contained in FWL's original proposal to USOE, was submitted for review to USOE staff on January 26, 1979. This evaluation plan may be found in Appendix B.

Subsequently, ETS reviewed the plan and indicated it could not be accomplished within the budget limits set by their subcontract. To meet a January 1 deadline for formative evaluation instruments, ETS prepared the following instruments for OE review:

1. Student Learning Items
2. Parent Interview
3. Teacher Log
4. Classroom Observation Record
5. School Site Questionnaire

These instruments may be found in Appendix B. They represented one approach to formative evaluation of the materials. It was not an optimally desirable

approach to either FWL or ETS since the items test student factual learning rather than development of critical viewing skills, and many of these items would need to be redrafted.

A number of factors hindered progress on formative evaluation during the first and second quarters of Phase I. First, ETS was operating under a serious disadvantage in having to develop instruments before materials had been developed. Secondly, arrangements with schools and teacher to test the materials could not proceed until a final evaluation plan was chosen. Third, the inability of secure OMB clearance of a field test instrument and confusion about the types of research that could be carried out without such clearance significantly delayed design and implementation of a final plan. During the second quarter, ETS submitted to FWL a revised plan which included a classroom field test during the spring of 1979 with an appropriately revised budget. FWL submitted this plan to USOE with a request that monies allotted for Phase II be moved to Phase I to permit field testing during the current year. Inability to meet ETS's February 15 deadline, which was required to make classroom arrangements with appropriate schools, subsequent delays in development of the classroom materials, and budgetary limitations made this classroom field testing impossible.

Finally, the expansion of the classroom materials beyond the originally anticipated size and scope resulted in the final drafts being available too late in the school year for field testing in the classroom even had funds to do so been available.

A number of alternative evaluation plans were thus explored, based on guidance

provided by USOE in interpreting OMB clearance provisions. Project Director Lloyd-Kolkin and ETS Evaluator Patricia Wheeler met in February, 1979, to discuss a variety of field testing options other than classroom field testing. On March 23, 1979, Lloyd-Kolkin, Wheeler, and WGBH Project Director Douglas Smith met to further discuss feasible field testing approaches and schedules. A plan to develop an evaluation panel of teachers who would be paid to review the classroom materials in depth was developed by ETS and is included in Appendix B. In essence, the plan called for ETS to hire 34 teachers and curriculum specialists representing different geographic areas, types of communities, curriculum areas, and student groups. These persons all had some experience teaching similar courses at the senior high school level so they could be expected to better evaluate the feasibility of implementing classroom activities.

This plan was adopted with USOE project monitor concurrence. In May, 1979, ETS sent a complete copy of the curriculum materials to each consultant and a review form for their comments and reactions. These were returned by the end of June, 1979, and in August, ETS submitted a report to FWL on the results of the teacher review of the classroom materials. This report comprises Appendix E, Parts 1 and 2, in some copies of this final report.

As noted in the discussion under Task 1 above, FWL and WGBH used the findings of the report as a guide to revision of the curriculum.

The family guide was evaluated in August, 1979, using a case study approach with seven families who were asked to use the guide for one week and were then interviewed in depth. Appendix B contains ETS's report on the family



guide formative evaluation. As with volumes I-III of the report on the review of the classroom materials, this report was used for a guide in the revision of the family guide.

### TASK 3: Printing and Distribution Planning

Efforts during Phase I of the project called for planning how to print and distribute the curriculum materials during Phase II, and on public information efforts to inform members of the target audience that curriculum materials will be forthcoming.

An early recommendation by FWL was that publication and distribution of the curriculum by an established publishing firm (either commercial or non-profit) would be preferable to printing/distribution by the Government Printing Office (as required by the RFP, August 14, 1978) or self-publication and distribution. Established publishers have larger financial resources to invest in printing, inventorying, etc., well-established distribution channels and marketing efforts, and a longer-term ability to disseminate than project staff funded for only two years.

Publication and distribution arrangements were discussed at a meeting of USOE and the four Critical Viewing Skills contractors in Washington on February 4, 1979. It was generally agreed there that the publication approach described above offers strong benefits for long-term distribution of the curricula and each contractor described the types of products being developed and for which ones they sought publishers. USOE agreed to conduct a bidder's conference of publishers in late March or early April, 1979, and asked each contractor to

indicate in writing which products they were interested in publishing. FWL indicated in a follow-up letter that classroom materials (student text, teacher guide, and thermofax masters) would best be published by the textbook division of a publishing firm while the family guide would best be produced and distributed by a tradebook firm or division.

Later developments indicated that each contractor should individually pursue publication arrangements for their own sets of materials. Therefore, Fred Rosenau in FWL's Washington, DC office undertook a search for a suitable publisher for the classroom materials, beginning in May, 1979. Rosenau sent a copy of the Table of Contents and Introduction to the following publishers:

Follett Publishing Co.  
Walker Educational Resources  
Xerox Learning Systems  
Cambridge Book Co.  
McDougall, Littell & Co.  
Silver Burdett Co.  
Hayden Book Co.  
Harper & Row  
Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corp.  
National Ed. Lab. Pubs.

In addition, Rosenau published a notice in Educational Marketer announcing the availability of the curriculum and search for a publisher. This notice may be found in Appendix C.

Several publishers expressed an interest in reviewing the complete manuscript of the classroom materials. These were sent to:

Random House, Inc.  
Walker Publishing  
Follett Publishing Co.  
MacDougall Littell  
NFIE/NIE  
American Home Economics Assn.  
Natl. Assn. Secondary School Principals  
American Federation of Teachers  
Scholastic Publications  
Assn. for Supervision & Curriculum Devt.

At the end of Phase I, two publishers were still considering publication of the materials. Others rejected the manuscript for a variety of reasons, including the small potential market for critical viewing skills in a "back to basics" era, complexity of the curriculum, and high reading level of the text. In the event that a publisher for the materials is not found during the first quarter of Phase II, current plans call for publication and distribution of the student text and teacher guide through the Revolving Fund at Far West Laboratory with a projected publication date of February, 1980.

FWL explored other options for publication of the family guide. The manuscript for this publication was submitted to the Consumer Information Center of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for review and was accepted as part of their catalog of offerings provided FWL furnishes 50,000 copies of the publication. The Consumer Information Center estimates that approximately 50,000 copies of a moderately popular free publication can be distributed within a six-month period. USOE project monitors verbally agreed that FWL could provide 50,000 copies at no cost to the Consumer Information Center, and it is anticipated that the guide will appear in its January, 1980 catalog.

#### Public Information

FWL sent a press release about the funding of the Critical Television Viewing Skills project to approximately 250 educational, general, and trade publications in December, 1978. This press release may be found in Appendix C. In addition, Project Director Donna Lloyd-Kolkin was interviewed by a number of representatives of the press.



During Phase I, the press release of information about the FWL project appeared in several publications. They include:

New York Times, 1/2/79, by Fred Hechinger (carried by Times News Service and LA Times-Washington Post News Service)  
Eugene Register-Guard (Oregon)  
Melbourne, Australia newspaper  
Milwaukee Journal  
and others  
Media Report to Women, 2/1/79  
Self, 3/79  
Media Digest  
TVision Newsletter  
TVision Magazine, 4/79  
Audiovisual Instruction, 3/79  
Croft Curriculum Letter  
Mass Media Newsletter, 1/79  
Phoenix (San Francisco State student newspaper), 2/1/79  
WEST News, 4/79  
Journal of Communication, Spring, 1979  
TV Guide, 6/6/79  
American Educator, 9/79.

Appendix C contains those articles for which we were able to obtain copies. In addition, general information about one or more of the four OE projects appeared in the following publications:

Teacher Magazine, 4/79  
Ladies' Home Journal, 3/79  
NY Times, 3/4 and 3/17/79.

Copies of these articles are also contained in Appendix C.

As a result of this effort, FWL has received approximately 125 letters from teachers and curriculum specialists across the country requesting more information about the project. Each of these requests has been answered with a letter from the Project Director, an introductory statement about the curriculum, a draft outline of the seven classroom units, and the article describing the K-12 curriculum which appeared in The New York Times, January 2, 1979. Appendix C contains this information package.

In addition, a number of other efforts intended to create an interest in critical television viewing skills curricula were undertaken. FWL provided information about the project to Ann Christine Heintz of the TV Commission of the Journalism Education Association. Ms. Heintz gave a presentation at the Association for Educational Communications and Technology on March 8, 1979 entitled, "Television as Literature." At that presentation, she described the Critical TV Viewing Skills projects and made available information about each project. Donna Lloyd-Kolkin served as the coordinator for informing the other contractors about the opportunity.

In April, Lloyd-Kolkin and Project Assistant Beth Hall gave a presentation about the project to students and teachers at the Journalism Education Association national convention in San Jose, CA.

Project Associate Debra Lieberman sent information packages to conference managers and presidents of national education and community service organizations, included with correspondence about workshops and conference presentations. The packages contained a newsletter about the workshops, a press release, a sample workshop agenda, an outline of the seven curriculum units, and two articles mentioning the K-12 curriculum published in The New York Times and TV Guide. Appendix C contains this press release.

The Student Panel meeting and information about the project were covered locally by KQED in San Francisco on its Evening Edition news program, June 19, 1979. The Student Panel and project staff were also interviewed for a segment on National Public Radio's national program, All Things Considered. This story was aired on July 7, 1979.

#### WORK 4: Workshop Development

The February 4, 1979 meeting at OE among contractors included discussion of workshop plans and designs. Because of the lack of travel and per diem funds permitted for workshop participants, it was agreed that USOE would make arrangements with national organizations for a Critical Television Viewing Skills Workshop to be held in conjunction with national and regional conferences of these organizations. In some cases, only one contractor might provide the workshop while in other cases, more than one contractor might be appropriate, depending upon the audience served by the conference.

In April, 1979, the Parent-Teacher Panel was contacted by mail for their comments and advice about topics to be included in the workshop. Their responses may be found in Appendix A. Their comments and suggestions were carefully reviewed by FWL staff in preparation for workshop development.

Full-scale planning for workshop scheduling and materials development began at FWL in May, 1979 when Debra Lieberman was hired with major responsibility for this task. The goal of Ms. Lieberman's efforts was to provide 10 workshops for teachers and teacher-trainers and 10 workshops for parent and community organization leaders.

During the third and fourth quarters of the project, arrangements were made with a number of educational and community-parent organizations to offer the workshops at national and regional conferences. A full list of the organizations contacted and projected dates and places for workshops may be found in Proposal--Critical Television Viewing Skills Curricula for High School Students: Training and Distribution, August 29, 1979.



Because the time allotted for each workshop differs, FWL's workshop model consists of a basic eight-hour plan which can be excerpted or expanded as needed. The differing demands of each workshop -- in terms of time, size of audience, facilities and interests of the group -- will require that FWL be extremely flexible in adapting the basic workshop model to the needs of each group.

The workshop materials developed include:

#### Parent Workshops

- Workshop Agenda
- Slides for introductory presentation
- Videocassette of BILL MOYERS' JOURNAL, "TV or Not TV?"
- Draft version of Family Guide to Television
- TV Fact Sheet
- Newsletter describing high school curriculum
- Resource List of Organizations
- Bibliography for Critical Television Viewing Skills
- Reprints of magazine articles about television and the family
- Workshop Evaluation Sheet

#### Teacher Workshops

- Workshop Agenda
- Slides for introductory presentation
- Videocassette of a news story describing the high school curriculum and showing high school students participating in curriculum activities
- Curriculum excerpts including introduction, Teacher Guide, table of contents, text, activities, and worksheets
- TV Fact Sheet
- Newsletter describing high school curriculum
- Introduction to curriculum
- Outline of the seven curriculum units
- Resource List of Organizations
- Bibliography for Critical Television Viewing Skills
- Reprints of magazine articles about critical television viewing and the classroom
- Workshop Evaluation Sheet

A full copy of the print materials for the workshops may be found in Appendix D.

The audio-visual materials are available upon request.

In September, 1979, Project Director Lloyd-Kolkin and Workshop Associate Lieberman conducted a family workshop and teacher workshop at Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) in Flint, MI. GISD was selected because 1) it covers a 23-school district-wide area representing a variety of socio-economic and ethnic groups, urban, suburban, and rural settings and variety of school administrative arrangements; 2) the teachers across the districts had earlier familiarity with television through an ADVOCATES project funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; and 3) the GISD staff were willing to organize the workshops on behalf of FWL immediately following the commencement of the school year. Information about the Flint workshops may be found in Appendix D. Seventeen persons attended the evening parent workshop and approximately 40 teachers the after-school teacher workshop. Informational evaluation sheets completed by the workshop participants provided valuable feedback to FWL on the revision of workshop materials.

#### Teachers' Workshop in Flint, Michigan

In this three-hour session, forty teachers, administrators, and media specialists were introduced to a variety of curriculum ideas for teaching critical television viewing skills to high school students.

Participants heard an introductory slide presentation which covered the history of the USOE projects in critical television viewing skills, the development of the high school curriculum materials, and an overview of the curriculum including a detailed definition of critical television viewing skills.

Most of the workshop was devoted to the high school textbook and teacher guide. Participants were divided into small groups and were given time to try a worksheet activity. Each group had a different worksheet to do, then reported back to the entire group. They shared ideas for applying these worksheets in the classroom and thought of similar or related activities.

Group discussion centered around some basic educational issues including the importance of media education in the high school, the effects of television on students' performance in school, the feeling that teachers must be as entertaining as TV in order to hold students' attention, and the existence of a "curriculum" on TV and other popular media which conflicts with the curriculum taught in school. The consensus was that all television is "educational television," and that the teacher can and should play a part in helping students become aware of this.

Curriculum materials and brochures from other organizations were displayed on a resource table. Participants saw a videotape of the Far West Laboratory curriculum in action on a news story done when the student panel evaluated the textbook and participated in the curriculum activities.

The workshop combined lecture, demonstration, and participation to inform educators about the issues involved in critical television viewing skills and to supply some concrete ideas for teaching these skills in school.



### Parents' Workshop in Flint, Michigan

The Parents' Workshop in Flint, Michigan was designed to encourage participants to express their concerns about television use in the home and to share their solutions to some of the problems they experience. Seventeen parents and teenagers attended the three-hour session.

The group watched a program called "TV or Not TV?" from the television series, BILL MOYERS' JOURNAL. It contains many facts about the impact of television on American society, opinions from prominent scholars and TV professionals, and interviews with a cross-section of families who tried living without TV for a month. The program was a springboard for group discussion and thought.

Everyone read through the Family Guide and tried some of the activities. The group devised a list of methods for regulating family TV use and for helping their teenagers become active and discriminating viewers. They also looked at copies of curriculum materials and brochures from other organizations concerned with television.

Lieberman outlined the seven major topics covered in the high school curriculum and suggested family discussions or activities that can help teenagers learn about these topics. The seven include 1) examining one's own television viewing behavior and reasons for watching, 2) the television industry and regulations on it, 3) television production techniques and dramatic form, 4) selling, 5) news and informational programming, 6) television's messages, portrayals of life styles and values, and 7) the future of television, changes in its delivery and technology, the choices viewers will soon be able to make.

Participants were concerned about helping teenagers become critical television viewers. This workshop provided them the opportunity to share their ideas and opinions, hear about TV's impact on society, learn about other groups involved with television and youth, and experience some methods for teaching their children to become critical, knowledgeable viewers.

#### TASK 5: Management and Reporting

FWL submitted quarterly reports to USOE at the end of each of the first three quarters which contained full details about staffing and management plans. In addition, Project Director Lloyd-Kolkin participated in several telephone conference calls with USOE and the other Critical Television Viewing Skills contractors and attended a meeting with this group in Washington on February 4, 1979.

Internal Laboratory procedures were followed in the administration of subcontracts with WGBH and ETS and in regard to hiring procedures of project staff.

A proposal for Phase II of the project was submitted to USOE on June 28, 1979 and substantively revised in August, 1979. Contract negotiations for Phase II were completed in September, 1979.

APPENDIX A



## BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS

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*access* National Citizens Comm. for Broadcasting, 1028 Connecticut Avenue, Room 402, Washington, D.C. 20036 Biweekly \$24/year

*Advertising Age* Advertising Publications, Inc. 740 Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611 Weekly \$12/year

*Agency for Instructional Television Newsletter* Agency for Instructional Television, Box A, Bloomington, IN 47401 FREE

*Broadcasting* Broadcasting Publications, 1735 DeSales Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 weekly \$25/year; also Annual

*CATV Magazine* Communications Publication Corporation, 1900 W. Yale, Englewood, CO 80110

*Cablelines* Cablecommunications Resource Center, 1900 L Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 Quarterly \$17.50/year

*Columbia Journalism Review* bimonthly, Columbia University, Graduate School of Journalism, New York 10027

*Federal Communications Commission Reports* weekly, U.S. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. 20402

*Journal of Advertising Research* Advertising Research Foundation, 3 East 54 Street, New York, NY 10022 Bimonthly \$30/year

*Journal of Broadcasting* quarterly, Broadcast Education Assn., Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122

*Journal of Broadcasting* Broadcast Education Association, 1771 N Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 Quarterly \$17.50/year

*Journal of Communication* Annenberg School of Communications, P.O.Box 13358, Philadelphia, PA 19101 Quarterly \$15/year

Publications (page 2):

*Journal of Consumer Research* American Marketing Assn., 222 S. Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL 60606 Quarterly \$12.50/year

*Journalism Quarterly* Assn. for Education in Journalism, College of Journalism, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455

*Learning* Learning, 530 University Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94301  
Monthly, \$10/year

*Mass Media Newsletter* Mass Media Ministries, Inc., 2116 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218 Biweekly \$10/year

*Media and Methods* North American Publishing Company, 134 N. 13th St. Philadelphia, PA 19107 Monthly \$9/year

*Media Report to Women* Media Report to Women, 3306 Ross Place, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20008 Monthly \$15/year

*Notes from the Center* Cable Television Information Center, 2100 M St., N.W. Washington, D.C. Quarterly Free

*Prime Time School Television* Suite 810, 120 S. LaSalle Street, Chicago IL 60603 Monthly bulletins

*Principal* National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1801 N. Moore Street, Arlington, VA 22209

*Public Telecommunications Review* National Assn. of Educational Broadcasters, 1346 Connecticut Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 Bimonthly \$18/year

*RTNDA Bulletin* Radio-Television News Directors Assn, WKAR, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48823

*Teacher* Macmillan Professional Magazines, One Fawcett Place, Greenwich CT 06830 Monthly \$12/year (includes a TV Talk column)

*Teachers Guides to Television* Television Information Office, P.O. Box 564, Lenox Hill Station, New York, NY 10021 Semi-annual \$3.50/year

Publications (page 3):

*TV Basics* annual, TV Bureau of Advertising, 1 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 10020

*TV Guide* Triangle Publications, Inc. Box 400, Radnor, PA 19088  
Weekly \$12/year

*TVision* Journalism Education Assn., 1101 W. Arlington Ave.,  
La Grange, IL 60525

*Television Age* biweekly, Television Editorial Corporation, 1270 Avenue  
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*Television Quarterly* National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences,  
110 West 57th St., New York, NY 10019

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Wells, Alan *Mass Media and Society* 1972 National Press Books \$6.95

Wulfemeyer, K. Tim *Beginning Broadcast Newswriting: A Self-Instructional  
Learning Experience* 1976 Iowa State University Press \$3.00  
GRADES 11-12



## BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS

### For Parent/Family Use:

Breig, James *What's On Tonight? A Guide for the Discriminating TV Viewer* 1976 Liguori Publications \$1.00

Kaye, Evelyn *The Family Guide to Children's Television: What to Watch, What to Miss, What to Change and How to Do It* 1974 Pantheon Books \$8.95, \$2.95

Logan, Ben *Television Awareness Training, for New Awareness, New Decisions, New Action* 1977 Media Action Research Center

Murray, Michael *The Videotape Book; A Basic Guide to Portable TV Production for Families, Friends, Schools and Neighborhoods* 1975 Bantam

PTA--TV Action Center *The PTA TV Trainer's Manual* 1977

Rutstein, Nat *"Go Watch TV!" What and How Much Should Children Really Watch?* 1974 Sheed and Ward \$6.95

Shayon, Robert Lewis *Parties in Interest: A Citizens' Guide to Improving Television and Radio* 1974 Office of Communications United Church of Christ; one booklet free, \$0.60 each

Winn, Marie *The Plug-In Drug: Television, Children and the Family* 1977 Grossman

## Resource List of Organizations

Action for Children's Television, Inc.  
46 Austin St.  
Newtonville, MA 02160

List of publications

Center for Science in the Public Interest  
1779 Church St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Publishes information  
offering alternatives  
to the junk food advertised  
on television

Committee on Children's Television, Inc.  
1511 Masonic Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94117  
(415)775-9434

List of publications  
Resource library

Council on Children, Media, & Merchandising  
1346 Connecticut Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Consumer interests of  
children

Ethel Daccardo  
3245 Wisconsin Avenue  
Berwyn, IL 60402

Booklet: *National Television  
Advertisers* \$1.50

Federal Communications Commission  
Public Information Office  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

National Assn. for Better Broadcasting  
P.O. Box 43640  
Los Angeles, CA 90043

Quarterly newsletter: *Better  
Radio and Television* \$3/year

National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting  
1028 Connecticut Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Correspondence Group  
P.O. Box 1039  
Palo Alto, CA 94302

Violence levels in TV programs.  
*Target List* \$2, list of  
commercial sponsors

Office of Communication  
United Church of Christ  
289 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10010

List of publications  
Offer consultation & legal  
assistance to improve  
programming

Student Participants  
Student Panel Meeting  
October 17, 1978  
Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum Project  
-----

Braxton Clark, Mission High School  
227 Ellsworth Street  
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2105 Prospect Court  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

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Menlo Park, CA 94025

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Oakland, CA 94605

Betty Lewis, Sequoia High School  
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East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Julia Lowell, Skyline High School  
5937 Chelton Drive  
Oakland, CA 94611

Jeff Hong, Skyline High School  
4363 Briar Cliff Road  
Oakland, CA 94605



CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING  
SKILLS CURRICULUM PROJECT  
STUDENT PANEL MEETING

The Student Panel of the Curriculum Review Board met on October 18, 1978 at Far West Laboratory. The Student Panel consists of nine high school students representing five Bay Area high schools and reflecting both urban and suburban locations. The composition of the Panel consists of three whites, two blacks, two Spanish speaking, one Asian and one Native American. Because the criteria for membership in the Panel included articulateness, this was probably an atypical group of students.

The purposes of the Student Panel meeting were to assess how sophisticated high school students are generally about television and to elicit a list of skills which they consider critical when viewing and analyzing television. Following staff and student introductions, the students broke into two small groups, each of which viewed and discussed two television programs during the morning. The two programs selected for viewing included Laverne and Shirley, the most popular primetime television series and Evening Magazine, a Westinghouse Broadcasting syndicated magazine program which is adapted to the interest of local audiences. Evening was selected because it is the most highly rated program in its time slot in San Francisco and represents a contrast to dramatic programming.

In addition to these two programs, students were given a choice between watching the noon news and a soap opera (All My Children) while they ate lunch. Three of the students chose the soap opera (partially in response to staff urging that someone watch the soap) while the remainder viewed the news.

The afternoon session centered on focused discussions of television issues (commercials, regulation, etc.) and the generation and prioritizing of a list of critical viewing skills.

Staff impressions of the students' ability to view television critically included:

1. Of the nine atypically bright/articulate/active students, only two were "semi-sophisticated" television viewers, i.e. able to recognize that one's view of the world outside immediate surroundings was created by television; that one could identify the audience for a program by the nature of the commercials present; and able to identify covert messages (e.g. that Shirley and Laverne actually engaged in deceitful, socially undesirable behavior but were presented sympathetically and positively).
2. Generally, students were most able to relate to the performance aspects of the television program, e.g. use of slapstick, smiling goodnature of television interviewers (deemed phony by the students), etc. Students rated the situation comedy as essentially taking a real situation people could relate to but exaggerating it to the point of unreality.

3. Students were generally unable to generalize from the content of one program to the overall pattern of television messages generally.
4. Students' favorite programs appear to be Soap and Saturday Night Live.
5. Students feel they watch considerable less television than their parents. Television is occasionally a topic of conversation between students and parents but may be a point of contention, e.g. one parent automatically turned off the set when homosexuality was a topic.
6. Television is not used regularly in any of these students' schools for instructional purposes although discussions about television programs, e.g. Roots, does occasionally occur.
7. Students are able to recognize changes in peoples' attitudes and behavior as a result of a particular program, e.g. Roots or Holocaust.
8. Students agree they are more likely to buy advertised products than non-advertised products (example was Propa-PH skin lotion versus store brand product with same ingredients) because television advertising gave the product an extra edge of credibility. All students agreed they had purchased products because they had seen an advertisement.
9. Students were not able to identify and analyze the persuasion techniques used to sell the products beyond the most obvious.
10. Students appeared to have relatively little perception of television as an industry/business whose primary aim is to sell them something.
11. Students had no conception that they could influence or affect what appeared on television beyond writing letters to local stations. There was no knowledge of the basic concepts of broadcast regulation or consumer activism.

Generally, students accepted television as it is without thinking very seriously about it. Although they could react to particular content of particular programs and complain about too many commercials or one program being better than another, their reactions tend to appear out of context of the overall impact of television. They tend to not recognize the consequences of living in a "television environment," nor do they examine the assumptions of television.

Staff felt that attempts to generate a list of critical viewing skills was not very useful because students' knowledge base was limited. However, the list of skills generated and the number of votes each obtained are listed on the following page.

1. Recognize exaggeration/distortion (8)
2. Use TV to learn as well as to relax (5)
3. Know why you're watching (5)
4. Recognize underlying (covert) messages (5)
5. How TV molds (viewpoints/opinions) (5)
6. Keep a distance from TV (3)
7. Know how to assess believability (3)
8. How to select programs (3)
9. Recognize that you learn about others from TV (2)
10. Restrictions/regulations on broadcasting (2)
11. Understand economics of industry (2)
12. What can be changed/how (1)
13. How medium (technology) influences message ( $\frac{1}{2}$ )
14. How to use off button
15. Plot/story
16. Relate TV to own beliefs
17. Know consequences of TV viewing.



OUTLINE  
OF CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM

Prepared by  
Far West Laboratory  
for Educational Research and Development  
October 24, 1978

## SUMMARY OF STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

### UNIT 1: Introduction to Television

1. To identify role of television in own life.
2. To distinguish between television and other mass media.
3. To explain communication process.
4. To consider a range of effects created by television.

### UNIT 2: The World of Television

1. To recognize commercial television's role as an advertising medium.
2. To be able to explain the development of television in the U.S.
3. To be able to compare and contrast the U.S. model with other models (including structure and financing).
4. To identify historical trends in television programming.
5. To identify factors which limit program viewing choices.
6. To be able to explain commercial and public programming philosophies.
7. To be able to explain the structure of American broadcasting.

### UNIT 3: You the Television Viewer

1. To become aware of own viewing behavior.
2. To develop standards by which to judge own behavior.
3. To learn strategies to manage own behavior.
4. To recognize possible effects of various viewing behaviors.

### UNIT 4: Dramatic Form

1. To be able to identify the variety of TV genre and differences among genre.
2. To consider how TV structure (half hour/hour formats, breaking for commercials, etc.) affect dramatic form and plot structure.
3. To identify differences between TV dramatic form and other dramatic vehicles (books, stories, plays, films).

### UNIT 5: Television Production

1. To explain different production elements manipulated during production (camera angles, music, etc.).
2. To understand the steps required to produce a program.
3. To understand the variety of job roles involved.
4. To understand the economic constraints on production.
5. To understand that all TV shows reflect production manipulation.
6. To be able to criticize a program aesthetically.

### UNIT 6: Advocacy Programming

1. To be able to recognize the common arguments used in advocacy messages.
2. To be able to counterargue these messages.
3. To recognize the impact of these messages in other areas.

UNIT 7: Entertainment Programs

1. To identify major themes of entertainment programs.
2. To identify dominant content trends.
3. To be aware of the role of television in creating social reality.

UNIT 8: News/Information Programming

1. To be aware of how TV selects news stories and how it covers them.
2. To be aware of the problems of "objectivity" and social responsibility.
3. To be aware of the problems of dual ownership in same market of broadcasting and print and limitations on source of information.

UNIT 9: Television Criticism

1. To be able to identify major features of criticism theory.
2. To be able to identify sources of television criticism.
3. To write own criticism.

UNIT 10: Television Activism

1. To be able to identify the major concepts governing broadcast regulation.
2. To be able to identify the agencies involved.
3. To be able to explain channels and procedures by which one can influence television programs.



## UNIT 1: Introduction to Television (Estimated Time: 1½ weeks)

### *Description:*

This unit is designed to introduce the student to the role of television in modern day life by considering what life was (is) like without television, how television differs from and is similar to other mass media, how the communication process works, and some possible effects of television's pre-eminent role in our lives. The unit is intended to be: a) a teaser to excite students' interest in the rest of the curriculum and b) part of a "core" unit on television for teachers who may wish to spend only one or two weeks dealing with television as part of an existing course.

---

### *Student Learning Goals:*

1. To identify role of television in own life.
  2. To distinguish between television and other mass media.
  3. To explain communication process.
  4. To consider a range of effects created by television.
- 

### *Example Student Activities*

1. Students list things they "know" and identify original sources of that knowledge.
2. Students take "quiz" about something outside everyday experience; compare each others' answers and discuss how they "know" the answers.
3. Students generate a list of different mass media and how they differ.
4. Students compare coverage of an event or idea by different media.
5. Students list characteristics of television.
6. Students develop their own communication process diagram; in class discussion comparing it to "standard" process diagram and highlight key elements; discuss how personal communication differs from "mass" communication.
7. Media deprivation experiment.
8. Media deprivation simulation, e.g. one group in class must behave as if they have no media information and another group has some important media information critical to the first group.
9. Students re-create a day before television, before radio, before newspapers (time-budgeting).
10. Students experience a TV bias quiz (a la Gerbner: how likely are you to be mugged? to get cancer, etc. comparing heavy viewers' answers and light viewers' answers with "right" answers).
11. Students generate a list of possible effects of television (on health, on time, on images and stereotypes, etc). and discuss in class.
12. Students generate a list of trends/fads related to television and other media and "track" them, e.g. Star Wars/Battlestar Galactica, Mork & Mindy (Na-Nu, Na-Nu), Welcome Back Kotter TV and hit pop song.

## UNIT 2: The World of Television (Estimated Time: 3½ weeks)

### *Description:*

This unit is intended to be a comprehensive introduction to the business of television: as an advertising medium. Specific material to be included is the history and development of commercial and public television in this country, comparison of U.S. system to other models, network/local station interface, television programming/scheduling, ratings, etc. The unit is intended to: a) provide a context for subsequent units; b) be part of a "core" curriculum for teachers who want to consider television briefly within existing courses; and c) be an integral part of a social studies "track".

---

### *Student Learning Goals:*

1. To recognize commercial television's role as an advertising medium.
  2. To be able to explain the development of television in the U.S.
  3. To be able to compare and contrast the U.S. model with other models (including structure and financing).
  4. To identify historical trends in television programming.
  5. To identify factors which limit program viewing choices.
  6. To be able to explain commercial and public programming philosophies.
  7. To be able to explain the structure of American broadcasting.
- 

### *Example Student Activities:*

1. Students analyze annual reports from television networks.
2. Students tabulate different types of interruptions in programs (commercials, promos, PSAs). Discussion of legal limitations, scheduling, purposes.
3. Students tabulate different program types from one week of TV Guide. Discussion of programming in the public interest, relative amounts of time devoted to program types and time of day broadcast, station reporting to FCC.
4. Students research history of television.
5. Students research other countries' television structures.
6. Students compare types of products advertised and program types, time of day.
7. Students examine Nielson diaries, ratings reports. Discuss who is most desirable audience for advertisers.
8. Students research relationships between networks, stations, advertising agencies, sponsors, independent producers by personal interviews, case studies, reading.
9. Simulation exercise where teams program and counter-program the fall season.
10. Simulation exercises where student acts as network scheduler with list of possible programs and their sources, costs, etc. Programmed exercise with results provided for choices selected.
11. Students track history of popular TV program and research ratings each year.

### UNIT 3: You the Television Viewer (Estimated Time: 1 week)

#### *Description:*

In this unit, the student examines and evaluates his/her own viewing behavior, compares it to others, generates own criteria by which to evaluate viewing, and considers effects of television viewing. The unit may be: a) part of a "core" curriculum and b) the beginning of on-going viewing behavior evaluation which should last through entire course.

-----

#### *Student Learning Goals:*

1. To become aware of own viewing behavior.
  2. To develop standards by which to judge own behavior.
  3. To learn strategies to manage own behavior.
  4. To recognize possible effects of various viewing behaviors.
- 

#### *Example Student Activities:*

1. Students log own behavior using sample forms provided, or Nielson diary or own form.
2. Class compiles own TV ratings and compares to Nielsons.
3. Students survey others about their viewing behavior.
4. Student takes a classmate's log and tries out their viewing behavior; compares to own.
5. Student researches amount of time most people use television.
6. Students list possible effects of heavy TV viewing.
7. Student lists personal objectives and evaluates own objectives in terms of viewing behavior.



#### UNIT 4: Dramatic Form (Estimated Time: 4 weeks)

##### *Description:*

This unit is intended to help the student examine television program types and their constraints and formulae. The unit has a heavy language arts orientation in that it considers basic dramatic form and how it is adapted to television.

---

##### *Student Learning Goals:*

1. To be able to identify the variety of TV genre and differences among genre.
  2. To consider how TV structure (half hour/hour formats, breaking for commercials, etc.) affect dramatic form and plot structure.
  3. To identify differences between TV dramatic form and other dramatic vehicles (books, stories, plays, films).
- 

##### *Example Student Activities:*

1. Tabulate different entertainment genre, e.g. situation comedies, action-adventure, variety programs, quiz shows, sports, news, etc. and types (e.g. war, horror, spy, westerns, science fiction, etc.) using historical TV logs.
2. Discussion of points of view and advantages implicit in different types of treatments, documentary vs. drama, docudramas.
3. Analysis of common plots (26 basic plots in the world?) and themes and human motivations. How these are translated for TV.
4. Consideration of constraints of writer in constructing half hour and hour programs, on-going series vs. individual program vs. mini-series. Soaps vs. sitcoms.
5. Consideration of how characters are created and developed over time.
6. Consideration of basic dramatic ingredients: conflict, protagonists, climax, denouement.
7. Compare book to film to TV (e.g. Little Women, Roots, American Short Story).
8. Consideration of spin-offs, copying, etc.
9. Read books created from TV shows (e.g. Madame Curie, Starsky & Hutch).

## UNIT 5: Television Production (Estimated Time: 3 weeks)

### *Description:*

This unit is intended to build on Unit 4 by further considering how television production influences the shape of programs. Content to be covered includes basic TV vocabulary: types of camera shots, and their impact of creation of image or mood, number of elements to be manipulated (video vs. film, sound and picture, studio vs. location); the economic constraints involved. Unit will also introduce students to the types of persons and teamwork required to put a program together and get it on the air. Basic outcomes of the unit should be a greater ability to appreciate aesthetics of television and an understanding that all TV programs are deliberately staged (and therefore "unreal") for technological and economic reasons.

---

### *Student Learning Goals:*

1. To explain different production elements manipulated during production (camera angles, music, etc.)
  2. To understand the steps required to produce a program.
  3. To understand the variety of job roles involved.
  4. To understand the economic constraints on production.
  5. To understand that all TV shows reflect production manipulation.
  6. To be able to criticize a program aesthetically.
- 

### *Example Student Activities:*

1. Student reads case histories of actual television productions.
2. Simulation exercise where student is producer with a budget for a certain type of show and must schedule personnel, activities, etc. Could be programmed so that certain choices lead to certain results.
3. Student writes own script utilizing scripting techniques.
4. Student produces own video program (if equipment available).
5. Narration exercise to demonstrate synergistic effect between sound and picture.
6. Editing exercise to demonstrate impact of editing choices on story.

UNIT 6: Advocacy Programming (Estimated Time: 2½ weeks)

*Description:*

Advocacy programming includes any television messages intended to persuade, e.g. commercials, political advertising, etc. The orientation of the unit is on the identification of persuasive arguments and their counterarguments and on the effects of such messages on the economic and social life of this country.

---

*Student Learning Goals:*

1. To be able to recognize the common arguments used in advocacy messages.
  2. To be able to counterargue these messages.
  3. To recognize the impact of these messages in other areas.
- 

*Example Student Activities:*

1. Analyze arguments used in television commercials and develop rebuttals.
2. Research the legal constraints on advertising.
3. Analyze variety of commercials/advocacy spots in terms of common propaganda techniques (glittering generalities, bandwagon, etc.).
4. Write own television commercials.
5. Supermarket survey of differences in price/ingredients/marketing in advertised package goods and store brands.
6. Simulation of media buyer with results tied to choices made (e.g. here's your budget to advertise product XXX, determine how much TV time vs. other types of advertising, which programs to buy into, how many consumers did you attract?)
7. Analyze a TV commercial ad campaign over time.
8. Read the Selling of the President; analyze an election campaign, discuss how politics has changed as a result of television.



## UNIT 7: Entertainment Programs (Estimated Time: 2 weeks)

### *Description:*

This unit is intended to help the student identify major themes, content and their effects resulting from entertainment programming. Included in this unit is the argument of whether television creates social reality or merely reflects society.

---

### *Student Learning Goals:*

1. To identify major themes of entertainment programs.
  2. To identify dominant content trends.
  3. To be aware of the role of television in creating social reality.
- 

### *Example Student Activities:*

1. Students conduct qualitative content analyses of entertainment programming in terms of social and ethnic stereotypes, problem-solving modes (e.g. violence), social patterns (e.g. men giving women advice, etc.). Analyze results and discuss content themes.
2. Discuss common themes on TV and how realistic they are, e.g. police and the law, family structure, violence.
3. Analyze programs individually in terms of overt and covert messages conveyed.
4. Class debate: does TV mirror social reality or create it?
5. Class discussion about effects of television on viewers.
6. Case study: The Zamora case in terms of effects of violence and First Amendment rights of broadcasters.

UNIT 8: News/Information Programming (Estimated Time: 3 weeks)

*Description:*

This unit focuses on news and informational programming in terms of the constraints on television coverage of the news, technological constraints, objectivity and social responsibility of newscasters, conglomerate ownership and gatekeepers, impact of TV on politics, coverage of pseudo-events.

-----

*Student Learning Goals:*

1. To be aware of how TV selects news stories and how it covers them.
  2. To be aware of the problems of "objectivity" and social responsibility.
  3. To be aware of the problems of dual ownership in same market of broadcasting and print and limitations on source of information.
- 

*Example Student Activities:*

1. Compare newspaper coverage of an event to TV coverage.
2. Simulation exercise where student is selecting news for the evening news report; student must select among alternative sources keeping in mind visual orientation of stories, availability of film crews, line-up and amount of time devoted to each story, etc.
3. Students research trends in news coverage, e.g. happy talk, use of news consultants, etc.
4. Visit local station; interview newscaster.
5. Discussion of agenda setting.
6. Read case histories--Due to Circumstances beyond our Control, Boys on the Bus, Warren Breed.
7. Consideration of international flow of the news.
8. Case history of social responsibility issue.

UNIT 9: Television Criticism (Estimated Time: 1 week)

*Description:*

This unit is intended to introduce the student to common elements of criticism (TV, film, literature), to stimulate students to read television criticism, to think critically about television programs and to write their own criticism.

-----

*Student Learning Goals:*

1. To be able to identify major features of criticism theory.
  2. To be able to identify sources of television criticism.
  3. To write own criticism.
- 

*Example Student Activities:*

1. To make a list of the elements of a TV program which one might criticize.
2. To list standards of what may be considered "good" about each element.
3. To read a variety of TV critics about one program.
4. To discuss economics of TV criticism.
5. To write own criticisms of a program; compare to others (classmates, professional critics).



UNIT 10: Television Activism (Estimated Time: 3½ weeks)

*Description:*

This unit is intended to introduce the student to the concepts governing regulation of broadcasting, the agencies responsible for regulation, and the processes by which one can "talk back" to the television set.

-----

*Student Learning Goals:*

1. To be able to identify the major concepts governing broadcast regulation.
  2. To be able to identify the agencies involved.
  3. To be able to explain channels and procedures by which one can influence television programs.
- 

*Example Student Activities:*

1. Case histories illustrating concepts of fairness doctrine, air-waves belong to people, First Amendment rights, broadcasting in the public interest, convenience and necessity.
2. Class exercise where different groups of students role-play different roles (activist group, FCC commissioners, local station management, etc.) in petition to deny exercise.

# TELEVISION VIEWING QUESTIONNAIRE

Program Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. What did you like about this program? Why?

2. What did you dislike about this program? Why?

3. What audience do you think the program was intended to attract? Why?

CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM PROJECT

CURRICULUM REVIEW BOARD MEETING

October 30 - 31, 1978

October 30, 1978

- 9 - 9:30: Welcome, Introductions
- 9:30 - 10:00: Overview of Project and Meeting
- 10:00 - 10:30: Don Roberts: TV in Life of Adolescent
- 10:30 - 11:00: Evelyn Kaye: Television and Families
- 11:00 - 11:30: Jim Anderson: Critical Television Viewing Skills
- 11:30 - 12:00: Susan Futterman: The Commercial TV Perspective; Resources  
for Teachers
- 12:00 - 1:30: LUNCH
- 1:30 - 2:30: What are Critical Television Viewing Skills?
- 2:30 - 5:00: Group Review of Curriculum Goals, Scope and Packaging

October 31, 1978

- 9:00 - 12:00: Small Group Refinement of Curriculum Units for Teachers,  
Student and Parents
- 12:00 - 1:30: LUNCH
- 1:30 - 3:00: Small Group Presentations
- 3:00 - 5:00: Group Review/Resolution of Curriculum



## ISSUES FOR CURRICULUM REVIEW BOARD CONSIDERATION:

### 1. Curriculum Development

The draft set of curriculum units, student learning goals and sample activities represents our first cut at the size and scope of the curriculum. Our primary attention has been directed to student learning goals and activities; teacher and parent/family materials will be parallel to and derived from the student curriculum.

Presently, we conceive of the student materials as consisting of:

1. Brief presentation of factual material related to the unit;
2. Resource readings, e.g. reprints from TV Guide, existing books, etc. which present a particular point of view. For example, an excerpt from Bob Shanks' Cool Fire which is a case study of putting together a segment of the Great American Dream Machine may be an appropriate resource reading for Unit 5: Television Production. Similarly, a recent TV Guide piece by Joyce Carol Oates detailing the author's perspective when a book is translated into television may be of interest in Unit 4: Dramatic Form.
3. Activities/Cases: These comprise a variety of active experiences such as programmed simulation learning exercises, content analyses while watching television, maintenance of viewing logs, calculation of ratings, class role playing exercises, etc. through which students can experience both viewer perspective and industry perspectives in a structured way.

Teacher materials will include an introduction to and rationale for the curriculum, learning goals and objectives, tie-ins with existing courses by unit, instructions about how to obtain primary source materials (films, videotapes, scripts, network annual reports, etc.), discussion questions and additional resources.

Family materials will include an introduction focusing on the use of television to stimulate teenager-parent communication; a list of issues (e.g. should you limit the amount of TV viewed) and possible solutions; a brief guide to the television industry; and activities paralleling units in the student materials.

During the Curriculum Review Board meeting, we need to consider questions such as:

- what are critical television viewing skills?
- do the proposed curriculum materials enhance development of these skills?
- are the curriculum goals comprehensive and complete?
- are the proposed materials appropriate to and attractive to the proposed target audiences?
- are the proposed units the best organizational structure to achieve accomplishment of goals?
- does each unit have its own "integrity"? how much time will be required to teach each unit? what sequence (or sequences) would most enhance the learning experience?

- are the proposed teacher materials useful or do they need expansion, e.g. provide teachers with additional factual material so that they can prepare lectures, answer student questions, etc.?

## 2. Packaging/Marketing/Adoption Concerns

The marketing goal of the project is to expose the maximum number of students possible to the curriculum. We have proposed that individual units may be incorporated into existing curricula (social studies, language arts) but together may also form a complete one semester elective course. To achieve this type of flexibility in packaging and marketing, we need to think about:

- should teachers be able to purchase only one unit or must they purchase the whole course?
- can the curriculum be broken down into a "social studies sequence" and an "English sequence" and marketed separately as well as together? For example,

### Social Studies sequence

Unit 1: Introduction to Television  
Unit 2: The World of Television  
Unit 3: You the Viewer  
Unit 6: Advocacy Programming  
Unit 8: Information/News Programming  
Unit 10: Viewer Activism

### English sequence

Unit 1: Introduction to Television  
Unit 2: The World of Television  
Unit 3: You the Viewer  
Unit 4: Dramatic Form  
Unit 5: Television Production  
Unit 7: Entertainment Programming  
Unit 9: Criticism

- is there a "core" set of units that we wish to require all adopters to purchase, e.g. Introduction to Television and the World of Television? That is, what are the most critical of critical skills and knowledge?

Resolution of these issues will also suggest options in the packaging of materials:

- should we produce ten student packets or one "textbook"?
- should we produce ten teacher packets or one generic teacher guide?
- should the materials be produced in looseleaf format so that teachers and students may collect and add materials as they go through the course or should the materials be bound and complete?
- are there additional ancillary materials, e.g. board games, that we may wish to include?

We expect that family curriculum materials will be parallel to but quite separate from student/teacher materials for classroom use. The range of marketing options for family materials is quite broad, e.g. excerpts published in TV Guide and/or Reader's Digest, publication in newspapers as a course in itself, etc. as well as distribution through newsstands, supermarkets, public libraries, and so on. Therefore, we need to consider questions such as

- can portions of the family viewing materials stand alone, e.g. a section on how family communication can be improved by focusing on a topic of interest to both parents and teenagers; general TV viewing issues and strategies for resolving parent-teenager differences; techniques for values' clarification discussions, and so on?
- what kinds of activities can we realistically expect families to engage in that will parallel and reinforce the kinds of classroom activities we are considering in the student materials?



PARTICIPANTS  
CURRICULUM REVIEW BOARD MEETING  
October 30-31, 1978

PARENTS

Ms. Edna M. Arrington Brown  
Ms. Allene "Chockie" Goddard, Community Action for the Urbanized  
American Indian, Inc.

TEACHERS

Dr. Barbara E.M. Cannon  
Ms. Deborah M. Blackwood  
Ms. Glenda Tremewan  
Mr. Paul Tremewan

STUDENT

Ms. Alice Dominici

CONSULTANTS

Ms. Evelyn Kaye, Action for Children's Television  
Dr. Donald F. Roberts, Stanford University  
Dr. James A. Anderson, The University of Utah  
Ms. Susan Futterman, Manager, Children's Programs, ABC-TV

WGBH

Mr. Douglas Smith, Director, Radio & Television for Learning  
Mr. Edgar White

ETC.

Ms. Theresa Strand  
Mrs. Patricia Wheeler

FWL

Ms. Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, Project Director  
Ms. Theresa Odden  
Ms. Karen Chatham  
Ms. Pearl Howell  
Mr. Woodrow Clark  
Ms. Beth Hall.

CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM PROJECT  
CURRICULUM REVIEW BOARD MEETING  
October 30-31, 1978

A Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum Mini-Conference was held at Far West Laboratory, San Francisco, on October 30 and 31, 1978. At the conference, FWL, WGBH and Educational Testing Service staff met with project consultants and the parent/teacher panel of the Curriculum Review Board to review and critique the goals, scope and content of the proposed curriculum and to consider marketing options for the final curriculum guides. A list of participants at the meeting is attached.

Following introductions on Monday morning, FWL staff reviewed the report of the Student Panel Meeting on October 18, 1978. Alice Dominici, Student Panel representative, reported her impressions of the Student Panel meeting. Project Director Digna Lloyd-Kolkin then presented a brief overview of existing resources about television available to teachers and parents that were displayed in the meeting room. These materials, collected by project staff, included a small library of books and articles about the effects of television on children and adults, family interaction about television, and general books about the media; program-specific materials for teachers to use in the classroom; and general curriculum materials about the mass media for use in high school.

Project consultants provided brief overviews of their work related to critical television viewing. Dr. Donald Roberts of Stanford University discussed research about adolescents and their use of television. He indicated that adolescence is the period in life where television viewing is generally lowest; that most teenagers watch television only when they have no attractive alternative activity available; and that teenagers often present media use models for their parents rather than vice versa. Next, Evelyn Kaye discussed the work of Action for Children's Television and the content of and response to her parents' guide to television (THE FAMILY GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S TELEVISION). Her presentation was followed by Dr. James Anderson who discussed the critical television viewing skills curriculum he and Milton Ploghoft have developed for junior high school students. Their curriculum covers television structure and regulation, uses and gratifications, dramatic intent, the child as critic, news and documentaries and commercials. It consists of a spiral bound textbook, student workbook and teacher's guide. Dr. Anderson's curriculum is being used in ten school districts around the country, and he recommends that school superintendents are the key decision-makers in adopting new curricula.

The afternoon session on the first day was devoted to a general discussion about critical television viewing skills, curriculum design and materials formatting.

On Tuesday morning, consultant Susan Futterman made a presentation on resources for teachers to encourage critical



television viewing skills and showed a film, A TV GUIDE: THINKING ABOUT WHAT WE WATCH. Most of the resources that are available are geared at the elementary school level and there are relatively few resources available for high school use. Next, the participants divided into three small working groups to generate a list of student learning outcomes that they considered important. These three groups included a parent group, a teacher group and a consultant group. The list of items each group generated is attached. Each small group reported back to the group as a whole on their discussion. The remainder of the session was devoted to a discussion of design and marketing constraints on the curriculum and resolution of differences among the opinions of each group.

Overall, a number of important points were raised by the Curriculum Review Board Meeting:

1. Student curriculum materials should not be consumable, i.e. a school district which purchases materials expects them to be used for at least five years and individual student workbooks to be kept by the student are beyond the budgets of most school systems.
2. The Curriculum Review Board recommended creating ten individual student units with one accompanying teacher's manual.
3. It was recommended that the curriculum be marketed either as a language arts curriculum or as a social studies curriculum rather than both simultaneously.

However, teachers felt that it may be easier for most teachers to incorporate the material within existing courses rather than to create a new course.

4. In some school districts, values clarification discussions are forbidden by school board policy, thereby limiting some of the curriculum's applicability to some school districts.
5. Parents in particular warned against a middle class bias to the curriculum and stressed that it needed to be applicable to all students.
6. Consultants recommended that the curriculum be organized around a unifying theme such as an economic perspective, a content perspective, a production perspective, a motives perspective (e.g. why do you watch television, with units related to a variety of viewing motives), or a "sense making" perspective (how can I make sense of where I am and television's role in creating that sense?).
7. The idea that critical television viewing skills are extensions of critical thinking skills about television should be stressed, both as part of curriculum development and as a selling point for the curriculum.
8. Parent materials should be attractively bound and sold through super markets and other mass distribution mechanisms. One perspective that might be considered

in producing parent/family materials is to direct them to teenagers as well as to parents, given the reverse modelling reality described by Dr. Roberts.

Following the Curriculum Review Board Meeting, FWL, WGBH and ETS staff met to decide upon the format and content of student curriculum materials so that WGBH could begin drafting these materials. The attached curriculum statement reflects the outcomes of both the Curriculum Review Board Meeting and this subsequent meeting of the Design and Planning Group.

Attachments:

1. List of participants
2. List of skills from parent group
3. List of skills from teacher group
4. List of skills from consultant group

DLK/bh 11/7/78



Parent Group (10/31/78)

1. Ability to recognize pros and cons of TV viewing--health, aesthetic, effects on learning, etc.
2. Ability to recognize why you turn on (watch) TV
3. Ability to recognize persuasion techniques (commercials, programs, roles)
4. Ability to question the reality of TV
5. Ability to understand how a show is produced (idea/outline/script/tape)
6. Ability to understand where the money comes from for TV programs
7. Ability to understand what is prime time
8. Ability to understand difference between public and commercial TV
9. Ability to identify ways of affecting TV content and regulation
10. Ability to recognize how new technologies might affect TV  
(e.g. satellite, cable, videorecorder)

1. The medium as the message
2. Sensitivity to and for violence
3. Editorialism
4. Logical reasoning/fallacies
5. Sampling procedures, cross-sections, etc.
6. How minorities, ethnic groups and women are depicted
7. Who produced whatever is shown
8. Using books in conjunction with TV
9. Provide bibliographies
10. Using words/understanding semantics
11. Public service announcements
12. Public vs. commercial TV/differences
13. Understand economics of TV
14. Role of TV in political process/effects/messages
15. Accuracy in depicting historical events
16. Understanding the production process
17. Make TV viewing activists
18. Make viewers feel in control
19. Aware of effect of surface things/perceptual influences
20. Incongruities
21. Kinds of problems that determine what goes out on TV
22. Impact media carries for us individually
23. Being able to read between the lines
24. What quality of interviewers, actors
25. Awareness of acting, techniques, etc.
26. Inertia and momentum of TV as an institution
27. Cyclical and static qualities
28. Futuristic implications
29. Difference between written and spoken images

Teacher Group (cont'd)

30. Social
31. TV as a role model
32. Examining role models and the treatments of groups
33. TV as a psychological manipulator
34. Fantasies vs. realities (emotional and rational implications)
35. Discovering alternative behaviors to TV watching as escapism, etc.
36. Watching TV to learn
37. The costs of TV in our lives
38. VHF, UHF, cable--discovering differences
39. Understanding unique characteristics of various forms of media, formats, productions
40. The power of visual impressions
41. Limitations/what TV cannot do
42. Role of music of TV sound

Consultant Group (10/31/78)

1. Know that you the viewer are the commodity being sold.
2. Every decision in television is a dollar decision.
3. The camera always "lies"--TV's world is not real.
4. Quit watching TV; watch television programs.
5. Every program has both implicit as well as explicit messages and value judgements.
6. It's possible to influence television.

Curriculum should have a unifying theme, e.g.

1. an economics perspective,
2. a content perspective,
3. a production perspective,
4. a motives perspective (what are your motives for watching TV, with units organized around motives such as watching for information, for relaxation, for fantasy),
5. a sense-making perspective (how do I make sense of the world, and what part does TV play in creating that sense).



# A CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

## Introduction

Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, in cooperation with WGBH and Educational Testing Service, is developing a critical television viewing skills curriculum for high school students. The goal of the curriculum is to enable high school students to become active and discriminating television viewers. An active viewer is not a passive recipient of television information and effects; rather s/he has information to use in making choices. A discriminating viewer is one who can make choices--in viewing and among content--using personally derived and defensible criteria. Since television viewing is a major leisure time activity for most teenagers and adults in this country, as well as a source of both pro- and anti-social learning, the curriculum will be instrumental in providing teenagers with lifetime coping skills useful to them now and in their future roles as adults and parents.

## What are Critical Television Viewing Skills?

Based on a review of research about the effects of television, and interactions with students, parents, teachers, broadcasters and expert consultants, the following critical television viewing skills have been identified:

1. Ability to evaluate and manage one's own television viewing behavior.  
For many people, television viewing occurs almost unconsciously rather than as a result of deliberate and active decision-making. An active and discriminating television viewer chooses if, when and what to watch based on personal needs and criteria. This critical viewing skill will be developed by providing students with tools by which they can assess their own viewing behaviors and motivations in relation to personal goals and objectives as well as strategies for decision-making about television. Informed decision-making is also guided by a knowledge of potential effects resulting from television viewing (e.g. on health, learning, etc.).
2. Ability to question the reality of television programs.  
Television programs are the result of a series of economic, technological and production value decisions. Students need to learn to question what they see on television in terms of how it got there, why and what it means. To develop this skill, students need to learn about the business of television, how television programs are developed and produced, and to examine the images and

messages which are presented. Armed with a sufficient knowledge base about how television operates and with practice in questioning what they see on television, students will learn that television's "reality" can indeed be questioned and examined.

3. Ability to recognize arguments employed and to counterargue.  
The arguments employed on television include both individual persuasive messages (e.g. commercials) as well as repeated messages about problem-solving techniques (e.g. violence), desirable behavior patterns, etc. These messages can be analyzed in terms of both the structure and validity of arguments and the assumptions and values on which they are based. By examining the messages presented on television, students can identify persuasive techniques, and their fallacies, analyze values on which they are based and clarify and defend their own values and opinions in relation to the television messages.
4. Ability to recognize effects of television viewing.  
A wide range of potential television effects have concerned responsible citizens, including effects on health, leisure time displacement, stereotyping, aggression, etc. By becoming aware of potential effects of television, students can come to recognize the effects of television on them personally and to learn to be on guard against possible negative or dysfunctional effects in their own lives.

To facilitate development of these four critical viewing skills, students need to have an understanding of the following content areas.

#### Economics of television

Television is an industry where every decision is made for financial reasons. The economic structure of the broadcasting industry has an impact on consumers' pocket-books, program quality, viewing alternatives and ability to influence the media. The recognition that commercial television delivers viewers to advertisers rather than programs to viewers should result in a greater ability to question reality and recognize arguments and persuasive techniques.

#### How a television program is produced

People make television programs and every program must evolve from an idea through a script to production and editing. Understanding the decisions made at each point in the process and the constraints affecting these decisions will provide the student with knowledge to assess television's reality as well as to develop standards by which to judge program quality.

### Bases of television regulation

The airwaves belong to the people, and television is an industry regulated by governmental agencies. As television consumers, students need to understand the legal bases for regulation, public service constraints on the industry and the mechanisms by which individuals and groups can actively influence the nature of television programming. The option for exercising those rights is up to individual choice, but knowledge that mechanisms for change do exist is critical to a sense of active control over the influences on one's own life.

### Curriculum Design

The curriculum materials now being developed will include a student guide, a teacher guide and a family guide to encourage both classroom and home learning experiences. The curriculum units, described in the attached course outline, may be offered as a one-semester elective course or incorporated into existing social studies and language arts courses.

The curriculum will stress an experiential activity-oriented approach to learning. Design of curriculum materials is intended to enhance:

1. the development of critical thinking skills in relation to television, i.e. student guide materials will be designed to encourage students to develop their own questions about television, to find ways to locate information to answer these questions, and to assist them in evaluating and drawing conclusions from the information they find,
2. use of primary learning materials to the extent possible, e.g. use of industry and regulatory agency documents, television scripts, etc. as supplementary reading materials,
3. reinforcement of basic classroom skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and
4. progressive skill and knowledge building as the student proceeds through the curriculum sequence.

The curriculum is print-based to encourage widest use; however, audio visual resources and ways to access them will be suggested and their use encouraged.



### What Will the Materials Look Like?

The student and teacher curriculum guides will be compatible, while the family guide will stand as a separate publication. Current plans for student materials include ten or more learning units, each organized around a separate topic. One teacher's manual will accompany all of these units. Each student learning unit and accompanying teacher material will include the following:

#### Student Unit

1. Unit Introduction--states the purpose of the unit
2. Stimulus material--quote, case study, script excerpt, etc. to stimulate student interest and begin the questioning process
3. Exposition (1000-2000 words)--brief presentation of factual material to provide student with enough background information to further development of questions about the content area
4. Student Activities--a series of experiential learning exercises, e.g. programmed simulations through which students discover ways of answering their questions; preparing and conducting class debates; writing criticism, etc.
5. Supplementary readings--these will be drawn from a variety of sources, e.g. excerpts from network annual reports, articles from TV Guide, script excerpts, etc.
6. Vocabulary
7. Additional resources

#### Teacher Manual

1. Statement of student learning objectives
2. Discussion questions for teachers to use in assisting students to develop questions about the material contained in the unit
3. Additional facts and discussion questions to assist teachers in directing student questions
4. Recommendations for selecting, sequencing and using activities
5. Suggestions about how to use supplementary materials
6. Additional resources--bibliography of film and television programs, sources of other primary documents



In addition, the teacher manual will include suggestions about how to tie-in the units with existing courses, how to access film and video material and may include sample or recommended lesson plans.

Student materials will be prepared using a 7th grade reading level as a guide.

Who Should use the Curriculum Materials?

The curriculum materials are targeted to senior high school students and their teachers. Teachers of language arts and social studies will be most interested in using the materials although other disciplines may also find much of interest in the curriculum materials.

What evidence will I have that the course is effective?

Student, teacher and family curriculum materials will undergo formative evaluation testing by Educational Testing Service during the spring of 1979. A full summative evaluation involving approximately 1200 students in five geographical locations will be conducted in the fall of 1979.

## CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM OUTLINE

### A Course for High School Students

#### UNIT 1, You and Television

This unit introduces students to television as a unique medium with a special role in the lives of many American people. Important to this unit is the students' logging of their own television viewing behavior, with opportunity to compare their viewing to several national averages.

Students will determine their own criteria by which to evaluate viewing patterns, taking into consideration television's characteristics and its influence on American values and life styles. This will serve to introduce students to the themes that will be covered in depth throughout the curriculum.

#### UNIT 2, The Television Industry

Unit 2 maps out the history of television and its organization including the networks, local stations, public television, the Federal Communications Commission, the role of the advertiser, the importance of ratings, and tactics of scheduling. Basic federal regulations regarding television are introduced so that students will comprehend the freedoms and constraints that are imposed on the industry.

Television distribution is examined as a business which, from the start, was automatically considered part of the American free enterprise system. The financing of programs and the relationships between producers, networks, and affiliates are examined. In light of the power and profitability of the medium, the fierce competition for high ratings and control of the airwaves is documented.

The development of television technology is described, showing its emergence as an invention of no parallel, embodying unique processes and effects. Future technologies and the debates regarding their regulation are also discussed.

#### UNIT 3, Programs and Production

This unit enables students to analyze dramatic television programs in much the same way they might approach a novel or short story. Dramatic elements such as plot construction, characterization, dialogue, and pacing are discussed along with the constraints on dramatic form imposed by the nature of the television medium.

Following this analysis, the unit next considers how the elements of television production influence the nature of the programs on the air. Content covered includes television production choices (video vs. film, types of camera shots and lighting, music track, etc.), economic constraints on production, types of persons employed, and the teamwork required to put a program together to get it on the air. The outcome of this part should be a greater understanding that all TV programs are deliberately "staged" (and therefore "unreal") for technological and economic reasons. Students will also develop an appreciation of the singular aesthetic principles of television.

#### UNIT 4, Selling

Selling, or advocacy programming, includes any television messages intended to persuade, such as commercials and political advertising. In Unit 4, students will learn to identify persuasive arguments and develop ways to counterargue. They will also be introduced to the impact of television on politics including voting behavior, political advertising, "image" politics, and ways in which political campaigns have changed.

In addition, this unit covers topics such as market research, the use of stereotypes in commercials, subliminal messages used to attract buyers, the size of advertising budgets, and the restrictions imposed by the Federal Trade Commission. The biases of advertising are discussed to point out that specific production techniques are chosen to suit specific goals and needs.

#### UNIT 5, That's The Way It Is?

Unit 5 focuses on news and informational programming; their production techniques, their power to influence opinion, and the legal and social responsibilities of their creators.

The constraints on television coverage of the news are examined including time limitations, technological shortcomings, and news policies imposed by the networks.

The power of news programming is also discussed. Editorial decisions such as choice of stories, their order of presentation, the length of time devoted to them, and the selection of accompanying images all serve to influence the implicit messages of newscasts and make objective reporting a difficult and often impossible task. Elements of television news are contrasted with print news, and varieties of documentary programming are described.

Students will learn about the Fairness Doctrine and discuss the First Amendment rights of broadcasters. Interviews with newscasters are included covering a wide range of controversial issues.

#### UNIT 6, The Television Environment

This unit has a dual focus: the nature of television content, and studies that have shown the effects of that content on viewers.

In the first part, students consider how television images compare to the real world. Portrayals of women, minorities, different age groups, and acts of violence are shown to be different from their real world counterparts. Attention is given to stereotypes and to the social and personal values of the TV environment: that violence resolves conflict, that good always subdues evil, that youth and beauty are the pathways to happiness and success, to name a few.

In the second part, research is cited suggesting that heavy television viewing has a significant effect on how people regard the real world. In confronting this issue, students will conduct their own research and evaluate a question that is pivotal to this curriculum: to what degree should television reflect life's realities?

#### UNIT 7, A Saving Radiance?

This unit is a re-cap of the entire curriculum and gives students the opportunity to reinforce and review the skills developed. It also presents a summary of new television technologies which are destined (by the mid-1980's) to erode the centralized programming power of the three commercial networks. While studying these new developments, students will address the issue of regulating television in the lives of their children in years to come.



## CRITICAL TV VIEWING SKILLS FILMOGRAPHY

### COMMERCIALS

#### But First This Message

Action for Children's Television  
46 Austin Street  
Newtonville, MA 02160

15 min., color

HIGH SCHOOL - ADULT

A sound film which includes film clips from children's television programs and commercials and statements from children, physicians, a toy manufacturer, a professor of communications, and a professor of child development.

#### It's As Easy as Selling Candy To A Baby

Action for Children's Television  
46 Austin Street  
Newtonville, MA 02160

11 min., color

HIGH SCHOOL - ADULT

A sound film which includes film clips of television food ads directed to children and a discussion of the influence of advertising on American eating habits.

#### Persuading the Public

BFA Educational Media  
P.O. Box 1795  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

14 min., color

ELEMENTARY - ADULT

The film intercuts humorous episodes illustrating persuasion techniques in an advertising agency and a political campaign. The film will both teach and delight students of English and the social studies.

#### Plain Man's Guide to Advertising

McGraw Hill Textfilms  
330 West 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10018

14 min., B/W

Uses animation and live-action to show the television viewer how to devise his own commercials.

FILMOGRAPHY

Page 2

COMMERCIALS (Continued)

The Six Billion \$\$\$ Sell

Consumer Report Films  
Mt. Vernon, NY

15 min., color

A Child's Guide to TV Commercials. This new film uses a lively combination of comedy, animation, and song to expose the questionable techniques of TV commercials. Children talking about their experiences along with clips from TV commercials makes this film a stimulating and enjoyable learning experience.

60-Second Spot

Pyramid Films  
Bos 1048  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

25 min., color

JR. HIGH - ADULT

The making of a television commercial is exposed as a gallant, funny and epic struggle in this well-made account of what goes on behind the scenes of major TV commercials.

Stalking the Wild Cranberry

Paramount Films  
5451 Marathon Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90038

14 min., color

HIGH SCHOOL - ADULT

The step-by-step production of a short commercial film to be used on TV to advertise a breakfast cereal. Actual shooting takes place in Colorado with Euell Gibbons, naturalist and writer who specializes in hunting for and using wild food plants.

The Thirty Second Dream

Mass Media Ministries  
2116 North Charles St.  
Baltimore, MD 21218

15 min., color

12 YEARS AND UP

The narrator points out how the selection and arrangement of ad images help sell products and distort reality by showing us a world and people that are nonexistent.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Anchor Man

CBS Films  
Madison Ave.  
New York, NY 10022

15 min., B/W

A day in the life of TV anchor man, Walter Cronkite, shows newsmen in action following leads, filming crises and composing the telecast. Also shows how a telecasting error is handled.

Campaign: American Style

BFA Educational Media  
CBS News  
2211 Michigan Avenue  
Santa Monica, CA 90404

39 min., color

HIGH SCHOOL - ADULT

Political campaigns, American style, have become big business. Today, major political offices are attained through the use of many of the advertising techniques associated with Madison Avenue. This film explores in depth a campaign which exemplifies the new "American style."

The Electric Flag

Pyramid Films  
Box 1048  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

12 min., color

JR. HIGH - ADULT

The crucial role that television and film play in the running of a political candidate. The film is both about the making of a candidate and the making of the film, "The Candidate."

Journalism--Mirror, Mirror on the World

Indiana University  
Audio-Visual Center  
Bloomington, IN 47401

52 min., B/W

HIGH SCHOOL - ADULT

Compares coverage of the same news story by four different sources. Analyzes the differences and deficiencies in the various stories. Presents a defense of each story by the editor concerned.

Shaping News for the Consumer

BFA Educational Media  
2211 Michigan Avenue  
Santa Monica, CA 90404

17 min., color

HIGH SCHOOL - ADULT

This tightly structured film shows that while more people believe in the truth of TV news than in other forms of news, it is primarily a headline service. We see the advantages and disadvantages of other news sources, concluding that each source can be well used if we know what to expect from it.

TV News: Behind the Scenes

Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corp.  
425 N. Michigan Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60611

This film follows the preparation of the local New York ABC evening news from start to finish. The occupational roles of each person involved are described. How the news is gathered and edited is presented as are many common production techniques seen on the news, such as preparation of graphics, film editing, etc. An excellent film.

TV News: Measure of the Medium

BFA Educational Media  
2211 Michigan Ave.  
P.O. Box 1795  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

16 min., color

ELEMENTARY - ADULT

Television news is the major source of information for most Americans. How much confidence can we have in it? To evaluate the news product, consumers of news need to be aware of the problems of news dissemination. This film demonstrates the complexities of broadcast journalism. It provides a frame of reference for critical judgement of news content and affirms the need to employ many sources of information to be well informed.

The Television Newsmen

Pyramid Films  
Box 1048  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

28 min., color

Follows Los Angeles "eyewitness reporter" Bill Redeker on two stories and the subsequent steps to presenting them on the evening news.

Two Days in the Life of CBS News

CBS Films  
Madison Ave.  
New York, NY 10022

30 min., B/W

Shows a behind-the-scenes view of the preparation necessary for a broadcast of the evening news and how a CBS team covers the 1964 presidential primary in New Hampshire.



PRODUCTION

Basic TV Terms: A Video Dictionary

Pyramid Films  
Box 1048  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

14 min., color

ELEMENTARY - ADULT

Leonard Nimoy takes the audience through the steps of producing television from start to finish. The process is shown for both big budget and small budget broadcast, industrial, educational, closed circuit television. The four sections include who does what, pre-production, production, and post-production.

The Electronic Rainbow: Television

Pyramid Films  
Box 1048  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

23 min., color

Leonard Nimoy conducts us through the world of television, showing how television has developed, how it works, and how it is used.

Frame by Frame: The Art of Animation

Pyramid Films  
Box 1048  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

13 min., color

ELEMENTARY - ADULT

A fresh look at a simple approach to filmmaking. Explores some of the possibilities for making a frame by frame, or animated film. Still pictures, flicker filming, cut-outs; cell, object and people animation; direct images on film; and time sequence filming are visually defined.

The Making of a Live TV Show

Pyramid Films  
Box 1048  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

26 min., color

JR. HIGH - ADULT

A fascinating behind-the-scenes view of the 1971 Emmy Awards Show. An insight into the teamwork, technical proficiency and skills involved in the making of a major TV production where there are "no stops, no second chances, just the show--LIVE."

PRODUCTION (Continued)

TV: Behind The Screen

Churchill Films  
662 N. Robertson Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90069

15-1/2 min., color

PRIMARY - ELEMENTARY

Uses a spy scene and a superhero children's show to explain how television programs are created by writers, actors, editors, and film crews. Shows different production jobs, explains how shots are edited together and how music and sound effects are added to make the final program. A completed program is transferred to videotape, stored and then put "on the air."

TV Producer-Director

Paramount Communications  
5451 Marathon Street  
Hollywood, CA 90038

14 min., color

JR. HIGH - ADULT

The glamorous field of television is seen realistically through the eyes of Bill Haslewood of KPIX in San Francisco, a young black man who produces his own community interest program. He is seen planning, producing and editing the show. He talks about his work, his attitude toward his career, and his advice to young people starting out in the career world.

The TV Talent Coordinator

McGraw-Hill Films  
1221 Ave. of the Americas  
New York, NY 10020

12 min., color

JR. HIGH - HIGH SCHOOL

Shows the excitement, challenge and satisfaction of the work of a TV talent coordinator. Follows a TV talent coordinator during a typical day of work.

ANALYSIS OF TV CONTENT AND EFFECT

TV The Anonymous Teacher

Mass Media Ministries  
2116 N. Charles St.  
Baltimore, MD 21218

15 min., color

TEACHERS, PARENTS

A brief, high impact treatment of a current social problem. Interviews with psychologists on the effects of television are punctuated with film clips of young children watching television. A unique film format allows the camera to focus on the child's face as a monitor on the bottom right of the screen shows specifically what the child is watching. The narrator, Dr. Robert M. Liebert, comments on current violence, commercial advertising, sexual and racial stereotyping, child involvement in the viewing of adult programs and other related issues.

A TV Guide: Thinking About What We Watch

A Churchill Film  
662 N. Robertson Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90069

17 min., color

ELEMENTARY - JR. HIGH

Examines stereotypes and other misinformation found in shows and commercials.

MISCELLANEOUS

Television Land

Pyramid Films  
Box 1048  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

12 min., color

An overview of television from its beginnings, the film looks at the course of TV broadcasting in its three basic categories of entertainment, news, and commercials. Commercialism, the film points out, has always dictated fundamental decisions about TV entertainment fare. "Commercial censorship" results in offensive programming, to the point of blandness.

## CRITICAL TV VIEWING SKILLS FILMOGRAPHY

### COMMERCIALS

#### But First This Message

Action for Children's Television  
46 Austin Street  
Newtonville, MA 02160

15 min., color

HIGH SCHOOL - ADULT

A sound film which includes film clips from children's television programs and commercials and statements from children, physicians, a toy manufacturer, a professor of communications, and a professor of child development.

#### It's As Easy as Selling Candy To A Baby

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A sound film which includes film clips of television food ads directed to children and a discussion of the influence of advertising on American eating habits.

#### Persuading the Public

BFA Educational Media  
P.O. Box 1795  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

14 min., color

ELEMENTARY - ADULT

The film intercuts humorous episodes illustrating persuasion techniques in an advertising agency and a political campaign. The film will both teach and delight students of English and the social studies.

#### Plain Man's Guide to Advertising

McGraw Hill Textfilms  
330 West 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10018

14 min., B/W

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COMMERCIALS (Continued)

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Stalking the Wild Cranberry

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14 min., color

HIGH SCHOOL - ADULT

The step-by-step production of a short commercial film to be used on TV to advertise a breakfast cereal. Actual shooting takes place in Colorado with Euell Gibbons, naturalist and writer who specializes in hunting for and using wild food plants.

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Mass Media Ministries  
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15 min., color

12 YEARS AND UP

The narrator points out how the selection and arrangement of ad images help sell products and distort reality by showing us a world and people that are nonexistent.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Anchor Man

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52 min., B/W

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16 min., color

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PRODUCTION (Continued)

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15 min., color

TEACHERS, PARENTS

A brief, high impact treatment of a current social problem. Interviews with psychologists on the effects of television are punctuated with film clips of young children watching television. A unique film format allows the camera to focus on the child's face as a monitor on the bottom right of the screen shows specifically what the child is watching. The narrator, Dr. Robert M. Liebert, comments on current violence, commercial advertising, sexual and racial stereotyping, child involvement in the viewing of adult programs and other related issues.

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# **FAR WEST LABORATORY**

**FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

April 26, 1979

It has now been almost six months since we met to establish guidelines for the Critical Television Viewing Skills curriculum project at Far West Lab. I would like to bring you up to date on what has happened since our meeting at the end of October and to ask your advice once again.

We now have a complete set of draft classroom materials which will be evaluated during May and June, 1979. The classroom materials consist of the following:

1. A 225-page student textbook. The textbook is divided into seven units which are described in the enclosed Critical TV Viewing Skills Curriculum Outline. Each unit in the student text consists of about 20 pages of exposition; individual, small-group, and class activities; and supplementary readings which either present a point of view on a particular topic or are primarily source materials such as television script excerpts, interviews with actors, producers, citizen spokespersons, etc.
2. A teacher guide which includes sample lesson plans for 90 instructional days including in-class activities, homework assignments, recommended films, and additional bibliography as well as an introduction to critical television viewing skills curriculum goals and unit objectives.
3. A set of thermofax masters for teachers to reproduce and use as "workbook"-type materials, e.g. logging of television viewing behavior, instructions for script preparations, etc.

To more fully explain the classroom materials to you, we have enclosed an introductory statement about the curriculum, descriptions of the seven units which comprise the curriculum, brief excerpts from three of the units, and some examples of the press coverage we have received.

Our current evaluation plan consists of hiring a panel of 35 teachers nationwide who have taught film or television literacy courses. We are

asking them to review the student text and teacher materials to be used and to rate the readings and activities proposed for each instructional day as well as to evaluate the over-all curriculum in each unit. The expansion of the student materials beyond our original projections which resulted in slippage of our deadline for completion of the materials as well as the funding agency's unwillingness to obtain government clearance for a wide-scale evaluation, has made field testing of the curriculum in classrooms impossible. We feel this is regrettable but hope the current evaluation plan will provide us with information to guide revision of the materials over the summer.

The current concerns for which we solicit your advice are twofold: 1) scope of the family guide and 2) workshop planning. Let me address each of these in turn.

#### Family Guide

We have decided that the family guide will be a short magazine-style publication which we hope to distribute on supermarket and drugstore racks. The family guide will be in question-and-answer format with the questions focused around those topics that are of particular concern for teenagers and their parents for which television may provide some information. For example, we believe that teenagers and their parents are concerned about making choices about sexual behavior. "Too much sex" on television is a complaint often heard. The family guide may pose a question such as, "What is television telling us about sex?" The answer will reflect what research is available about sexual behavior that is presented on television programs and will discuss the nature of concerns that various groups have expressed. Teenagers and parents can use this information if they choose to discuss sexual behavior and how it is presented on television as a trigger for family discussions on this topic. Further, having read the family guide, they may find that they see sex on television in a new or different light. We would like to ask you for your ideas about topics that you think would be of particular interest to families who read this guide.

#### Workshop Planning

Our contract calls for the development of workshop materials to be used during the second year in conducting ten teacher training workshops and ten parent and community organization workshops. We are hoping to conduct these workshops in conjunction with regional and national conventions of teacher organizations such as the National Council for Teachers of English and with regional and national conventions of parent and community organizations. We are just beginning to plan for these workshops and solicit your advice on what kinds of



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information you think would be most needed and of greatest interest to teachers and parents to enable them to help students develop critical television viewing skills.

Budget restrictions preclude holding another meeting in San Francisco to discuss these concerns. Therefore, we would like to ask you to set aside one day between now and May 18 to think about this project and share your ideas with us. The Contract Compliance office of Far West Lab will be sending you the forms for you to complete in order to be compensated for your help.

Enclosed in this packet of materials are two sheets which we would like you to complete and return to us. The first sheet, entitled "Ideas for Family Guide Topics," should be used to jot down your suggestions of topics that are important to teenagers and their families which television may address in some fashion. The second sheet, entitled "Ideas for Teacher and Parent Workshops," should be used for you to share topic areas and learning objectives for both the teacher workshops and the parent workshops. On both sheets please try to communicate your ideas as completely as possible. Don't hesitate to use additional pages.

We recognize this is a great deal of material for you to assimilate. If you have questions that we can answer or ideas that you wish to discuss in person, please feel free to call me collect at (415)565-3320.

Thank you very much in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin

Enc: Introductory statement  
Outline of the 7 units  
Textbook excerpts  
Press articles  
Worksheets

DLK/bh

Please return to  
Donna Lloyd-Kolkin  
Far West Laboratory  
1855 Folsom St.  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
by May 18, 1979

IDEAS FOR TEACHER AND PARENT WORKSHOPS

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IDEAS FOR FAMILY GUIDE TOPICS

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IDEAS FOR FAMILY GUIDE TOPICS  
From Glenda Tremewan  
5/18/79

1. Television: Is it really the boob tube?
2. Television: the great babysitter?
3. How television has changed the classroom.
4. Using television programs to stimulate family conversation.
5. Homework versus television--when should kids close the books?
6. Preparing kids to watch controversial programs.
7. When should children begin to select television programs?
8. Who really watches the most television, Mom, Dad, or the kids?
9. How television programs can change classrooms.
10. How about a television for your kid's bedroom?
11. Talking with your children about what they see.
12. Does television really teach values?
13. Electronic television games--are they worth the money?
14. Get college credit and watch television at home at the same time.
15. Bugs Bunny--villain or culture hero?
16. How much TV is too much?
17. Should parents monitor their children's viewing behavior?
18. When should parents turn off the TV?
19. Television can enhance and enrich your child's education.
20. Can parents influence the programming of local television stations?
21. Teaching your children to be active rather than passive viewers.
22. TV talk show guests--the new "experts."
23. Should you invest in a home video recorder?
  - a) how to use it
  - b) building a tape library
  - c) care of tapes and recorder
24. Plan a calendar for family viewing.
25. How television can affect your child's self-image.
26. Can television affect your children's attitudes about other people?
27. From "Step 'n' Fetch It" to "Cool Dude."
28. Help the English teacher--teach your child to identify plot, setting and characterization when he watches television.
29. How to help your children distinguish between fact and opinion.
30. Do your children understand what they see?
31. Teach your child how to view commercials.
32. How to watch TV with your kids.
33. Is violence on television as "American as Apple Pie?"
34. Is television helping to create new stereotypes?
35. The local news programs--"ho ho" news.
36. What does public television do with your contribution?
37. What does your child learn from television about careers?
38. Help your children distinguish between fact and opinion.
40. Television's role in civil defense (how to use your television during a tornado watch or warning).
41. What does television have to say about sex, the sexes, old people, family size, family planning and what is important in life?



Suggestions for Family Guide Topics  
Dr. Barbara E.M. Cannon  
5/18/79

TV as a Resource for Developing Strategies for daily living:

1. TV Programs as sources of techniques and ideas for building skills in interviewing, securing employment, receiving promotions and raises, building incentives and motivations for success in any endeavor.
2. TV Programs as sources of ideas and techniques for influencing others, achieving goals and objectives of any type.
3. TV Programs as sources for ideas and insights for selecting experts, physical and human resources for solving problems: medical, financial, interpersonal relationships.
4. TV Programs as sources of ideas for awareness and improving personal appearance, attributes, speech, body language in various settings.
5. TV Programs as sources of ideas and topics for composition and writing skills, e.g. factual reporting, technical writing, creative writing, etc.
6. TV Programs as sources for critiquing skills and methods used by actors, announcers, panelists, producers, advertisers, directors, graphic artists, designers, technicians, editors, etc.
7. TV Programs as sources for discussions about home, family, and society.
8. TV Programs as sources for games that youth and adult may use and develop for clubs in the community, school, and the home.
9. TV Programs as a source of successful image makers and other societal influences, abstract (psychological) and concrete.
10. TV Programs as sources for analyzing the situations of life as they affect varying groups reflecting cultural pluralism: age, ethnicity, sex, class, educational, regional, geographical (distinctions and diversities). Bias, discrimination, etc.
11. The use of TV as a motivator for letter writing, protest, campaigns, telephoning, voicing opinions re negatives and positives of advertising, programming, roles, etc.
12. TV as usurper of valuable time.
13. TV as an indicator of the present economic and sociological trends.
14. TV as a disseminator of news.
15. TV as propaganda.
16. TV as a promoter or deterrent to better relationships between youth, adults and other diverse groups.

IDEAS FOR FAMILY GUIDE TOPICS  
From Debroah Blackwood

Topics which need to be covered in the student-family areas:

1. Fact versus fantasy--how do you tell which is real?  
What critical skills does a student need to develop to distinguish "fact" from "fiction"?
2. What stereotyping of roles of men/women; children/adults; blacks/whites, etc. are done (or changed) by TV?
3. How does the cost of production/marketing affect the family unit (parent/student) in their daily lives?
4. Peer/Parent conflicts
5. Career choicess--how do you make them, rather than specific ones from which to choose.

Question: How are you going to market the family guide--franchised? National distributor, etc?

Note: The sex pitch will backfire with parents in this part of the country! We live in an era of ever-widening backlash--don't eliminate it, just be aware of the effects in writing and marketing it.

5/16/79

From: Lupe Ortiz

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin  
Far West Laboratory  
1855 Folsom St.  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
by May 18, 1979

### IDEAS FOR FAMILY GUIDE TOPICS

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#### Areas of concern

From talking with my children and from my own experiences, we would like to see many changes in television and media. The following are areas we would like to see more of.

1. Sex education for different age groups. One can learn much from having even a general view on the matter as long as it is done in a positive way. This alone would eliminate sexism, exploitation etc.
  - A. Begin with simple educational material covering different areas of sex such as simple communication, social and public responsibility.
  - B. Depending on the response one could progress to other areas which on this subject are many such as dating, peer pressure. Health and emotional stability being very dependent on good relationships with other people whether sexually, or otherwise.

It bothers me very much that there is something so common in television to see sex and violence together as if the two inseparable.

2. Science fiction leading into true science material, much of todays science fiction is derived from fantasy. It would be good to see the two come together in a learning situation that youth could relate to.
3. Todays youth and adults alike have much of their major problems solved by modern devices brought about by advanced technology. Machines like computers and adding machines seem and are causing us to use our brains less and less. Reading, writing and other areas of education that were once adapted to easily are now being written in simpler and easier ways because the average reading level in children as well as adults has been lowered. By exercising our minds in areas of mind working inducers i.e. riddles, games, puzzles to aid us in

cont'd

a mind expansion program we don't at the present time have with ordinary television. Television is such that a variety of methods and ways of stimulation for the mind for more than a temporary time is missing and must be developed.

4. Being of Mexican ancestry I am a firm believer of bilingual education. This encompasses all aspects of viewing i.e. educational, social and cultural programming such as mentioned in the previous page.

At the present time I am on the board of directors of a Bilingual Radio station that has about 1 year to go before beginning operation. The programming and systematic approach to bilingualism is the first of it's kind in the nation. It will be servicing the majority of the population in the San Joaquin Valley through Public Radio.

With this in mind and the research data which was gathered on the needs of one of the largest minorities in the country, one can determine the same kinds of needs exist in Public Television. The Spanish speaking at this time and place need representation in all aspects of media.

I would like to say before I close that the information that was sent to me was very general and without specificity. I'm not a professional person in the field of media or any other so maybe this is the problem, but I had wanted to view a more detailed plan. I'm truly sorry I didn't attend last Octobers board meeting, I don't think it helped my comprehension or lack of knowledge of the program by being absent.

Thank you and hope to hear from you soon.

Lupe Ortiz



Ideas for Teacher and Parent Workshops  
Dr. Barbara E.M. Cannon  
5/18/79

1. Use videotape excerpts as preludes to teacher and/or parent discussions of TV's effects on viewers.
2. Use videotape excerpts to launch discussions on:
  - a. Fostering positive goals and objectives.
  - b. Determining deep structure or hidden meanings in behaviors and dialogues.
  - c. Parent perspectives of a specific incident revealed in the videotape.
  - d. Teacher perspectives of a specific incident revealed in the videotape.
3. Conduct informational give and take sessions with producers, script writers, directors, advertisers, technicians, actors, editors, etc. from the field of TV.
4. Develop a set of parent and teacher recommendations for ways to change negative TV Programming.
5. Specify goals and objectives for the recommendations for change.
6. Ask teachers and parents to develop negative and positive ways to use TV in the home and school settings.
7. Develop sets of mini-questionnaires/assessments to gather parenting and teaching strategies for the use of other parents and teachers to motivate youth, etc.
8. Develop a set of questions such as:
  - a. What decisions do you make based on TV viewing?
  - b. What actions do you take based on TV viewing?
  - c. What actions do high school students take based on TV viewing?
  - d. What decisions do high school students make based on TV viewing?
  - e. How do parents use TV as a source of communication and ideas with high school youth?
  - f. How do teachers use TV as a source of communication with high school students?
  - g. What methods can be tried?
  - h. How is the teacher used as a positive force? As a negative force?
  - i. What control does the general public have on TV's programming for high school students?
  - j. What can high school students do to change TV programming?

IDEAS FOR TEACHER AND PARENT WORKSHOPS  
From Deborah Blackwood

As a practicing teacher--biggest asset would be having curriculum materials which were easily incorporated/integrated into an existing curriculum area (language arts; social studies, etc.)

Practical application--materials need to be flexible enough to withstand cutting and lifting from overall curriculum into existing language arts/social studies/ etc. classes.

Strength of teacher guide will be the tie-in units with existing courses.

Concept of "pitching" the training program exposure to national/regional conferences should be combined with exposure through professional journals of these same areas.

- lead time on English/Social Studies/Curriculum and Instructional associations conventions is about 6-8 months!
- publication deadline for abstract/prospectus of articles explaining research/concept is usually 2-4 months (depending on when the pre- and post-conference issues are scheduled).

Suggestions for workshops  
from Glenda Tremewan  
5/18/79

1. I suggest that you contact the National Council of the Social Studies. Each year it holds regional conventions. The Great Lakes Regional Council of the National Council of the Social Studies will hold its annual convention next year in Detroit, Michigan. Besides keynote speakers, and the usual book displays, there are many small group sessions. It would be a good opportunity to conduct a workshop for teachers.
2. I believe, not having seen the textbook, that Unit 6 is very weak. However, this is probably because Unit 6 is the one I would emphasize the most if I were teaching the course. I believe the skills and knowledge in this unit are of far more significance than any of the others. I have checked with teachers, administrators and department chairmen from several schools about which aspects of this specific curriculum would be selected for incorporation into their existing curricula. Unit 6 is always at the top of the list.

#### Topics

1. As a teacher, I would enjoy a workshop in which I studied the concepts of point of view, perception and argument.
  - a. How can the media be used to change or develop a point of view?
  - b. How can our perceptions of reality be altered by music, lighting, angle, etc.?
  - c. What techniques are used to sway thinking, to propagandize and to "win" arguments?

What is an argument? What is logic-illogic? A presentation of the common fallacies with examples and then opportunity to look at and also read examples and then analyze them (to develop skills or refine skills of logical thinking).

2. I would like to know about the direction, mechanics of filming and placement of microphones that are requisite to a successful program. Many teachers now videotape student presentations, some original, others based on those seen on television.
3. Since the activities suggested in the sample you sent me indicate that major student activity will be student discussion, teaching teachers how to ask provocative questions and achieve maximum student participation in discussions would be a good idea.
4. I believe that educators would like to become informed about ITV.

5. Teachers and/or parents should understand the concept of "the medium is the message." A workshop could show teachers how messages, content, and significance can be altered. Is it done intentionally? If so, how?
6. How teacher, student and parent viewers can influence television.
7. The implications of copyright legislation.
8. Video recorders.



From: Lupe Ortiz

Please return to  
Donna Lloyd-Kolkin  
Far West Laboratory  
1855 Folsom St.  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
by May 18, 1979

#### IDEAS FOR TEACHER AND PARENT WORKSHOPS

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In the area of parent and teacher workshop, the first set of goals that should be set up are:

communication between the two groups with the objective being a feeling of cooperation and understanding of both needs. The parents needs being on the receiving end of the communication.

Outlining the subjects proposed by the parent assuring a level of understanding by the teacher as to what the needs of television viewing are.

Once this are determined, a positive plan of action must follow. The step which follow are the most important ones, those of coming to an agreement on both the parent, teacher and viewer.

CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM PROJECT  
MINUTES OF THE STUDENT PANEL MEETING  
June 18-22, 1979

During the week of June 18-22, 1979, the high school Student Panel met at Far West Laboratory to review the Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum tentatively entitled Television: A Course of Study. They read the curriculum, filled out most of the worksheets, and talked about the topics suggested for discussion throughout the text. The worksheets omitted were the ones that required activities that would extend beyond the one-week time period, so these were read and discussed only.

Participants in the panel included: Tina Affrunti, Eric Auchard, Steven Brito, Braxton Clark, Lisa Espinoza, Jeff Hong, Bettye Lewis, and Julia Lowell.

The overall reaction to the curriculum was positive and enthusiastic. All participants agreed that there is a need for course work in this subject area, but they felt it would be more widely used if incorporated into existing courses in English and Social Studies rather than used as a course on its own. They didn't think that many high schools would choose to offer it as a course, due to budget cuts and a back-to-basics philosophy, so they suggested that the Teacher Guide offer specific instructions to teachers in other subject areas. The textbook might move from class to class, with teachers coordinating its sequence of use throughout the school year or semester.

They divided the units this way:

| <u>Unit</u> | <u>Subject Areas</u>                       |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1           | Social Studies, Psychology, Math           |
| 2           | Social Studies, Business                   |
| 3           | English, Drama, Film-making                |
| 4           | English, Modern American History, Business |
| 5           | American Government, Journalism            |
| 6           | Social Studies, Psychology                 |
| 7           | American Government, Home Economics        |

All agreed that the best way to use the curriculum would be in a course of its own, and all hoped that the interest generated by future publicity would convince school districts to adopt the materials and offer a full one-semester course about television.

They suggested that a Glossary would be useful for easy reference in learning the meanings of new words related to television.

The following comments and recommendations were made by the Student Panel for each unit:

#### UNIT 1

Many current programs and TV stars are mentioned. This will outdate the curriculum very soon.

In general, the graphs are confusing.

--P. 3 is acceptable.

--P. 4, the heading, "none under 18" should read, "none under age 18 in the family." The same change should be made for "any under 18" and "any under 6."

--P. 5 is trying to say two things in one graph, so it should be divided into two graphs, one showing total viewing time per week, one showing relative viewing times in each period.

The readings in Unit 1 are interesting.

#### Worksheets

1/1 and 1/2 generated lively discussion.

1/5 was interesting, but the categories overlapped and there was some initial confusion about using the worksheet.

1/9--The group enjoyed it.

#### UNIT 2

The list of companies owned by each network was very revealing and was new information to everyone. It generated much discussion.



On p. 46 the HAPPY DAYS rating was not circled on the chart, as stated on p. 47.

The text dealing with ratings and scheduling tactics was thought-provoking.

Some students were concerned that the "Changes Proposed" article by William H. Jones will be outdated soon. All felt the information in it was important.

Eric said, "The business side of TV is something you never hear about. The book explains this in detail, giving concrete examples of the seamy side of television."

#### Worksheets

2/1--The Nielsen Ratings for February 15-17 were not attached, so the exercise was done with Nielsen Ratings for February 8 and 15 found in the text. This worksheet was uninteresting.

2/2--This is another simple exercise, and there was some question about why it was necessary to go through the motions of thinking like a network executive, when the text describes the process adequately. On the other hand, everyone loved the names and descriptions of the shows.

2/3--This worksheet was the most thought-provoking one in Unit 2. It made everyone analyze American life styles and viewing habits.

#### UNIT 3

It was surprising to read that HAMLET and THE FLINTSTONES have many elements in common. The group made a list of similarities and dissimilarities: perhaps a worksheet on this would be useful.

The description of plot development was excellent. It would be useful in a Sophomore English class.

On p. 84 there is a list of three types of conflict situations. In Tina's English class, they were given a fourth: Fate. After discussion, the group agreed that Fate is a part of all conflict situations, but not a separate



category in itself. Perhaps the text could comment on this.

The section on Exposition is good.

On p. 93, the two conflict situations provided good discussion topics for comparing television and "real life."

The comparison between film and video was clear, but one point was never made clear in Unit 3: when a TV director uses video, is the signal from all the cameras recorded for later editing, or is only one tape rolling? On p. 141, Jay Sandrich says he tapes the input of all four cameras. How common is this? Are there cost constraints? Can good directors rely on their judgement enough to chose shots without taping the input of the other cameras? This topic came up repeatedly.

Look out for masculine references only. For example, "cameraman" should be "camera operator." Change references from "his crew" to "the crew" or use "his or her crew."

On p. 102, the description of camera movement could include illustrations.

Bettye said, "It held my interest and had a lot of perscnal interviews which made it more interesting."

Tina said, "Learning about the production, filming, lighting, etc. was fascinating because it taught me new concepts I had never studied before."

#### Worksheets

3/1--Good.

3/2-3/5--These were discussed only. All seemed interesting.

3/6--Good.

3/7--Didn't generate much interest.

#### 419 California Street

This was an enjoyable section. Everyone let their imagination go wild, while realizing that most of their ideas wouldn't be suitable for TV. The exercises

brought out a great deal of creativity and revealed a high level of media sophistication in the group.

#### UNIT 4

Everyone was interested in this unit but felt it should have included a more thorough study of subliminal messages in advertising and a more extensive discussion of market research techniques.

Eric commented at the end of the "Language of Selling" section on page 151, "Play up 'seller's market.' If the networks have the power to be discriminating, there is not as much of a reason TV must program its shows for the lowest common denominator. Networks are ultimately responsible for the quality of programming, not advertisers, as has been previously suggested."

#### Worksheets

4/1, 4/2, and 4/3--Good.

4/4--Some students did a spoof on advertising style, using animals instead of people in the video portion. This exercise is similar to the scheduling tactics worksheet 2/2 in that it encourages students to use the same mentality as the powerful TV policy-makers. This should be explained or justified--or criticized--on the worksheet.

#### UNIT 5

In general, this was one of the best-liked units. Everyone is interested in this topic.

Did the event mentioned on p. 195 (Social Responsibility of News) really happen? Make it clear in the text.

On p. 195, the description of ENG Reporting seems to be out of sequence. Does it belong after the discussion topic given at the top of p. 196?

The reading that begins on p. 236, "In Conversation with Don Hewitt," is too long, according to some of the students.

Steve said, "They have some excellent interviews with some news casters. It goes into detail...I liked the story about the Kennedy Shooting. They Have some good points of view. The interview with Don Hewitt was interesting."

Eric said, "The chapter on the News was interesting because it took you behind the scenes of particularly good news shows, showing their inner workings and their goals."

Tina said, "Chapter 5 kept my interest and taught me a great deal about the news."

#### Worksheets

5/1-5/4--Good.

5/5--At first, some students felt there wasn't enough happening in their schools to merit a news program, but after discussion, all agreed that there is plenty to report on in any school. They wished they had the opportunity to try it.

#### UNIT 6

Everyone felt the statistics were very revealing and significant. There was much theoretical discussion about them.

On p. 256, both pie diagrams should have the same graphic design.

The graph on p. 257 is confusing. Use four separate graphs or make the lines more distinguishable. For all graphs, be sure that the commentary is on the same page as the graph.

Upon reaching p. 259 there were many jokes about, "Hey, at last there's a simple, straightforward graph!"

On the graph on p. 260, put a thin space between each pair of bars, or make them contrasting shades to distinguish them more.

All sections dealing with the effects of television content on viewers were interesting.



The group discussed the validity of some of the conclusions drawn from the data. Is TV causing heavy viewers to think and behave differently than light viewers, or is there another factor that hasn't been considered?

The article on Esther Rolle, p. 278, needs a follow-up explaining that she did return to GOOD TIMES. What is her justification?

There was debate about the reading on p. 304, "The Great Homogenizing Machine." Some students believed that many school districts would reject this curriculum if they saw that it dealt with homosexuality in any way. Others said that it was an important topic and the interview should stay in.

Steve said, "I like Unit 6 because it goes into detail about what races are on TV. They have a poll that I like. It has some good interviews. I really enjoyed the interview with Susan Harris."

#### Worksheets

6/1--Too easy.

6/2-6/6--Seem good, covering important topics.

6/7--A lot of fun.

6/8--Intriguing.

#### UNIT 7

Everyone felt this unit should contain more information, because it deals with interesting topics. They believed that subjects such as cable public access and the role of small, independent producers would be suitable for Unit 7. More speculation about the future of television programming and the reduced role of the networks would be appropriate.

The group was quite sophisticated in discussing guidelines for regulating their children's viewing. They had strong, definite opinions about priorities and methods. Bettye made a note that it would be important to keep that topic in the curriculum because it is interesting.



Worksheets

7/1-7/6--It is a good idea to repeat Unit 1 worksheets for comparison.

7/7 & 7/8--Great.

GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM

Jeff: "Stimulates good conversation about social implications."

Bettye: "I believe the statistics have a strong effect, also the personal interviews make it very interesting." She suggested a title: Television: The Way It Is.

Eric: "I like the way it kept the chapters personalized as opposed to generalized. Some worksheets were just average, the same thing you might expect from any other school exercise. Some aren't so run-of-the-mill; more should be like that."

Steve: "Make more of a distinction between the text and the readings that quote people's opinions."

Tina: "The worksheets are important because they are a change from just reading. But some of them aren't quite worth it for they are just too easy. Discussions are a critical aspect of the program."

Lisa: "It makes the reader realize what television is all about."



They call television a medium because  
nothing on it is ever well-done. 1

Fred Allen, comedian  
of the 40's and 50's

When you start hearing Barbara Walters  
talking about mass murder like it's a  
batch of oatmeal cookies, it's going  
to affect you. 2

California high school student

Once I thought the most important political statement we  
could make about television was to turn it off. But television  
can instruct, inform, and inspire, as well as distract, distort,  
and demean. And turning it off rejects the good with the bad.  
My family wants its voice added to the summons for quality,  
and I urge you to speak up, too, in every way possible. This  
marvelous medium, with all its potential for laughter and  
light, is worth fighting for. 3

Bill Moyers  
television reporter

---

Television has become the indispensable  
American medium. We watch a lot of it.  
In fact, each one of us watches more than  
four hours a day, on the average. Do we  
use TV positively in our family life, or  
does TV use us?

Try the following exercises with your  
family. We hope that you'll have the  
opportunity to learn a little more about  
TV and how it fits into your life.

**HOW MUCH DO YOU WATCH?**

Leave this on top of your set.

To start, find out how much TV you and other members of your family watch in an average week. Use this form to fill in the total hours you spend viewing each day, and then total up your hours for the week.

**FAMILY MEMBERS**

Write in your names here:

| Monday      |  |  |  |  |
|-------------|--|--|--|--|
| Tuesday     |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday   |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday    |  |  |  |  |
| Friday      |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday    |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday      |  |  |  |  |
| TOTAL HOURS |  |  |  |  |

(You may also wish to record the names of shows you watched for the week. If so, try to keep track of those programs that all or most of your family watched together.)

**WHAT THE RESULTS MEAN...**

They could mean many different things. To find out, consider these questions:

- Were you surprised by the time you spent with television? Was it less or more than you thought?
- Do you remember times when the set was just "on," with no one watching? If so, why was it left on?
- How much time was TV viewing a family activity? What kinds of shows were popular with everyone? Which shows were not?
- Did you talk about those shows you watched as a family? What kinds of discussions did you have?
- Did you use your newspaper TV listings or TV GUIDE in helping you choose what to watch? Or did you just turn on the set to see what was on?
- Would you want to change the way TV is part of your family's life? If so, how?

## LET'S FACE IT!

Television figures in family life in many different ways. Some of these issues appear below. Which way do you face? How does your position differ from that of other members of your family? Have each member of the family choose the number from 1 to 5 which best indicates where he or she stands. Then discuss your answers.



It's good for families to talk about the TV they watch. They can learn about each other.

1 2 3 4 5

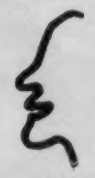
It's bad. A lot of families can't talk about these things without quarreling.




In our house TV is a good way for us to avoid each other. Turn on the set, sit down and stare at the screen.

1 2 3 4 5

TV is a way of bringing our family together -- it's fun to share something together.




We're careful about what we watch on TV. It's important to be selective, to know why you're watching a certain show.

1 2 3 4 5

TV is almost all entertainment. It's a way to escape problems, to give your mind a rest. Just turn it on and see what happens.




Characters on TV family shows are very real -- a lot like some of my friends and their families.

1 2 3 4 5

Most characters on TV family shows don't seem very real to me, even though they're "realistic." They may be enjoyable to watch, but they're exaggerated.




On the whole, I'd say my family could do with a lot less TV. There are other things we can do with our time that would be more valuable.

1 2 3 4 5

TV's important in our family. If we didn't have it, we wouldn't know what to do with ourselves.





### WHAT'S YOUR TVQ?

How much do you know about TV? Not about the programs -- or the stars -- but about the industry and the habit. Answers to some of these questions may surprise you, but they're the kind of thing that top TV executives think about when they make programming decisions.

Give yourself 10 points for each correct answer and then figure out your TVQ!

1. On a typical Sunday night, one out of every two Americans is
  - a. at the movies
  - b. watching television
  - c. knitting sweaters
  - d. reading
2. If you're a member of an average TV household, your tube is on more than
  - a. 40 hours a week
  - b. 50 hours a week
  - c. 60 hours a week
  - d. 70 hours a week
3. You're the ad manager for a new perfume called "Thirty Love," designed to appeal to active women ages 18-34 with its heady, sporty fragrance. To buy thirty seconds of commercial time on a top-rated prime time show, you will have to spend about
  - a. \$8500
  - b. \$15,000
  - c. \$25,000
  - d. \$40,000
4. You've just manufactured a banana-flavored soft drink called "Bingo" and you want to run a series of commercials showing everyday people comparing Bingo to other leading soft drinks. What is the position of the Federal Trade Commission (the agency that regulates television advertising) in regard to your ad campaign?
  - a. the FTC encourages this kind of advertising because it believes these commercials, when truthful, let people know about product differences.
  - b. the FTC discourages such ads.
  - c. the FTC allows you to run the ad, as long as you do not mention your competitor's name.
  - d. the FTC prohibits such ads.

5. Which of the following is NOT usually true of the typical television hero:
- he resorts to violence only when he has to
  - he is good looking, white and in his 30's
  - his beliefs often differ from those with great wealth or political power
  - he is married.
6. It has been shown that watching a lot of television colors the way people look at the world. Which of the following has NOT been shown?
- adult heavy viewers are much more likely than light viewers to own guns for protection.
  - heavy viewers who are children are more likely to think it's "all right to hit someone if you're mad at them" than light viewers.
  - in Hawaii, heavy viewers are better drivers than light viewers.
  - heavy viewers are more likely to be afraid of walking city streets alone at night than light viewers.
7. If the people listed below were in your family, who would be the one most likely to watch the most TV according to Nielsen statistics?
- Annie, age 8
  - Henry, age 15
  - Morton, age 29
  - Rhoda, age 59
8. The A. C. Nielsen Company measures our TV viewing habits. Their Storage Instantaneous Audimeter -- known to some as the "little black box" -- is installed in about 1170 homes and results in "ratings" which determine which shows stay on the air and which are taken off. Which of the following is NOT true about this device?
- it records only when the TV set is on, and to which channel it is tuned.
  - Nielsen pays families to have the Audimeter installed in their homes.
  - the identities of these families are kept secret.
  - the information gathered from these households measures the viewing habits in all American homes accurately.
9. If you owned a television station, your license to operate would come up for renewal every three years. The Federal Communications Commission is the regulatory agency which oversees this process. Which of the following is NOT an FCC guideline or law affecting approval of your license application?
- you should devote at least one hour out of 12 to public affairs programs such as news, talk shows, and consumer shows.
  - you should give "reasonable" time to important community issues and treat them "fairly."
  - your station should produce at least two hours of its own programming daily.
  - if you sell a half hour of time to a political candidate, you must offer to sell a half hour of time to the opposing candidate.
10. Violence on television, cause for much debate over the past 25 years, hit its peak in 1976 and is now on the downswing. TRUE or FALSE.

## TV Q ANSWERS

1. b. In numbers, this means about 100 million people.
2. a. 43 hours and 52 minutes, to be precise
3. d.
4. a.
5. d. Most leading male TV characters are single. Interestingly, item c is generally true, indicating that we find appeal in characters who are in conflict with the top layers of established society.
6. c. In Hawaii, heavy television viewers were shown to be more reckless behind the wheel than light viewers.
7. d. Rhoda is in the heaviest-viewing group -- women, age 55 and older. Women in general watch more television than men. Teenagers watch the least amount of television, compared to other age groups.
8. d. The sampling can't be exact, and the Nielsen Company itself notes that ratings are really just estimates. Over a long period of time, however, a program's rating becomes more meaningful. Notice that the "little black box" can't tell if anyone's watching the set or, if they are, whether they're enjoying what they're seeing.
9. c. "a" is a guideline while "b" and "d" are strict regulations.
10. TRUE. Apparently, sponsors and TV executives have reacted to the public outcry against televised violence.

What's your TVQ? Give yourself 10 points for each correct answer:

- 90 - 100 points: Move over, Freddie Silverman!
- 70 - 80 points: You've got yourself a hit show!
- 50 - 60 points: Broadcasting may not be your "bag" but you've got good TV sense.
- 30 - 40 points: A lot to learn. There's more to TV than the on-off button.
- 0 - 20 points: Your show's been cancelled.

### HEROIC FEET!

If, for one day, you could skip your feet into the shoes of a television hero or heroine, whom would you choose? Now, think about the reasons for your choice: what qualities of this television character are appealing to you?



### IS IT LIVE OR ON TAPE?

For a number of years, people have been studying what we see on television and comparing it all to what we see in the real world. Did you know . . .

- Though about half the people in this country are women, only about a quarter of TV characters are female. And of those, an unusually large number are in the "young and attractive" category.
- Old people on TV are more often than not shown to be unsuccessful and unhappy.
- Glamorous careers are TV trademarks. Policemen, lawyers, doctors and others with exciting jobs are portrayed much more frequently than they appear in real life.
- Non-white males are more than twice as likely to be cast in comic roles on television than they are in other roles.
- While the number of violent acts on TV has declined over the last three years, hurting or killing someone is still shown to be an effective way to "solve" problems and conflicts on some programs (and keep viewers glued to their sets). Many people believe that television viewing -- especially young children -- learn some of their own behavior and standards from television and feel that they, too, can resolve conflicts in this way.



## WHAT ABOUT YOU??

The average American spends a lot of time with TV. In fact, a Minnesota family who had their television set disconnected for a month said "it was like losing a member of the family." When they were reunited with their set, they were much happier.

Look at the statements below. They're based on recent Gallup Polls and Nielsen television ratings. How do you and your family compare with them?

o Although teenagers watch less television than any other age group, 44 percent of them believe they spend too much time watching television (only 24 percent said they watched too little TV).

o The average American family of 5 or more people has the television set on almost 60 hours a week. That's more than eight and a half hours a day.

o Is there a relationship between violence on TV and the crime rate in this country? 67 percent of teenagers say "yes."

o The average preschool child in this country watches more than half an hour of TV a week after 11 PM. If this were your own child, what would you say?

■

Perhaps you're one of those who'd like to spend some of your TV viewing time doing something else. Don't hesitate to take action, to make individual and family decisions. Chances are you'll be glad you did!

\*\*\*\*\*

This Family Guide has been produced under a subcontract from the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, which was federally funded from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, U.S. Office of Education, Contract No. 300-78-0495. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, or the Far West Laboratory for Education Research and Development, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government or the Laboratory.

Prepared at WGBH's Office of Radio and Television for Learning by Ned White.

1. From THE GOLDEN AGE OF TELEVISION: NOTES FROM THE SURVIVORS, by Max Wilk. Dell Publishing Co., Inc.
2. From BILL MOYERS' JOURNAL: "TV or Not TV?" Copyright 1979 by WNET/13.
3. As quoted by Beth Ashley in the San Rafael (CA) Independent Journal

**APPENDIX B**



# **FAR WEST LABORATORY**

**FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

January 26, 1979

Ms. Peggy Saunders  
Contract Specialist  
U.S. Office of Education  
Department of Health,  
Education & Welfare  
7th and "D" Streets, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202

RE: Change of Evaluation Plans Under  
Contract 300-78-0495 (F/S 183)

Dear Ms. Saunders:

In its August 14, 1978, proposal to USOE, the Laboratory outlined a two-phase evaluation plan for field-testing curriculum materials produced by the Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum project. Formative evaluation activities, to be undertaken during Phase I (October 1, 1978 - August 31, 1979), consisted of (1) unstructured interviews with students, teachers, parents, and other evaluators who had reviewed the curriculum units; and (2) observations of classroom use of the draft materials at two sites in the Boston area. Summative (impact) evaluation activities scheduled for Phase II (September 1, 1979, on), were to include approximately 1,200 students in five regions beginning in September, 1979, and continuing through the fall semester in schools offering the curriculum as an elective course, i.e., in the manner for which the materials are optimally designed.

This evaluation plan was the basis for the project budget awarded under this contract and is the current scope of work for the project. The Laboratory and its subcontractors feel that the plan provides a systematic and comprehensive evaluation of the curriculum materials.

Subsequent to the award of the project, USOE has orally indicated to the Laboratory that a more extensive formative evaluation effort during Phase I would be preferred and that the extensive Phase II summative evaluation could be eliminated. At least two rationales have been advanced for this approach: (1) OMB clearance of the curriculum evaluation effort can be avoided; and (2) commercial publication of the curriculum, which does not require extensive summative evaluation data, appears increasingly likely.

Consultation with ETS has indicated that expansion of the formative evaluation plan will require an increase in the subcontract budget currently allotted to ETS. Therefore, Far West Laboratory requested that ETS prepare several formative evaluation plans and budgets. ETS's response is attached.



January 26, 1979  
Ms. Peggy Saunders  
Page 2

Based on its study, ETS has developed and presented the following evaluation options:

OPTION A: THE CURRENT PLAN

Option A is the evaluation plan for Phase I and Phase II as described in the original proposal. It requires no budget or other contractual changes.

OPTION B: NO IMPACT EVALUATION

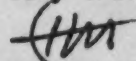
Option B permits a one-phase test of the curriculum materials in use. Student learning and development of critical television viewing skills would be assessed through the use of multiple-choice items. A maximum of 21 teachers in three locations would use one or more of the curriculum units and maintain logs describing their reactions to the materials. Option B includes evaluation of the family guide materials using a case study approach with nine carefully selected families. Ms. Wheeler's letter of January 9, 1979, indicates the advantages and the serious disadvantages of this strategy. Adoption of this plan would require increasing the total Phase I budget by \$28,129. Phase II expense, however, would be significantly reduced.

OPTION C: FULL SCALE, SINGLE PHASE EVALUATION

Option C, still a single-phase evaluation plan, clearly improves on Option B by permitting testing of the curriculum as a whole course in nine summer-school classes. The significant advantage of Option C is that it permits evaluation of a revised and close-to-final curriculum and includes development of impact-type evaluation data required for presentation to the Joint Dissemination Review Panel. These features dramatically reduce the three disadvantages of Option B, yet finish the formative and summative activities during year one of the contract. Adoption of Option C requires increasing the total Phase I budget by \$53,682 and a reduction of the succeeding Phase II budget.

Far West Laboratory recommends adoption of Option C as the most fruitful evaluation plan for field-testing of the Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum. Therefore, the Laboratory requests that the Phase I budget be augmented by \$53,682 to \$261,674 to permit implementation of this evaluation strategy (see attached budget schedule). If this transfer of funds is approved, Far West Laboratory understands that the summative evaluation, will not occur during Phase II and plans to strengthen its marketing efforts to achieve national distribution of the curriculum. Budgetary changes to reflect deletion of the Phase II summative evaluation and improvement of dissemination efforts will be reflected in the Phase II budget which will be submitted to USOE in July, 1979.

Very truly yours,



K. W. Harms  
Director -- Administration

KWH:lc

Enclosures: (1) January 9, 1979, letter  
from Ms. Wheeler  
(2) Budget Schedule



EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE



BERKELEY OFFICE

1947 Center Street  
Berkeley, California 94704  
Area Code: 415 849-0950

January 9, 1979

Ms. Donna Lloyd-Kolkin  
Far West Lab  
1855 Folsom Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Donna:

Based on our discussion last week at your office, I have prepared two alternative budgets. These, along with our original budget, are attached. Option A, as you recall, is a spring-summer-fall design including both formative and impact evaluations. Option B is an assessment in spring only. Option C is a spring-summer assessment.

Option A is for the original proposal. (We would need to augment this budget to cover honorariums for project participants.)

Option B would consist of a formative evaluation on a small scale (one teacher/region/unit for three regions and seven units plus nine families). Our schedule for Option B would probably look like this:

|                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| January-March  | Instrument development |
| February-March | Site identification    |
| April-May      | Field testing          |
| June-August    | Data analysis          |
| September      | Report writing         |

The advantages of Option B are that it is relatively cheap and would be completed during Phase I. The disadvantages are numerous and include the following:

The schedule is very tight for both materials development and field testing.

We cannot assess the continuity of the curriculum or overlap between units since no class will have time to complete the series of units.

There is no opportunity to evaluate any substantive revisions made in the materials.

Teachers, students, and families will probably be using very rough drafts of the materials which could interfere with their evaluation of the materials (i.e., their comments might tend to be more negative because the materials are not as attractive as the final copy will be).

Many activities will be implemented by only one or two teachers and others not by any teacher. Evaluation of activities may often be based on no more than teacher opinion.

We cannot consider format, illustrations, and possibly supplementary readings (if release to reprint is not obtained before April).

The sampling across regions, types of communities, SES levels, ethnic groups, etc., will be poor. There are too many cells for only 3 classes per unit.

Instrument development should follow curriculum materials development. Some might question the content validity of the test.

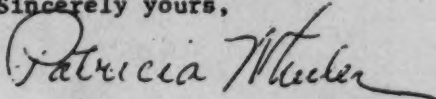
Option C is similar to Option B except that we will field test the curriculum in nine summer school classes. This has the same advantages as Option B and will afford us the opportunity to evaluate the impact of some revision and also continuity throughout the curriculum and overlap between units. The other disadvantages of Option B remain and the work schedule becomes even tighter. Added to the Option B work schedule would be the following:

|                |                                                            |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| February-April | Summer school site identification                          |
| May-June       | Instrument revision/development                            |
| July-August    | Field testing                                              |
| September      | Analysis and writing report on summer school field testing |

In order to identify sites for both the summer and the fall, ETS must have an answer as to which of the evaluation options will be used in the study by the middle of February. By now, it is too late to ask some districts for fall participation, but some smaller districts could still add a course on critical TV viewing skills for summer and fall. If we wait beyond February 15th, we will have difficulty locating sites that could offer a one-semester course.

I hope we are able to work out a plan that will allow us to develop a quality curriculum which has gone through appropriate stages of development, formative evaluation, refinement and impact evaluation. We want to provide useful feedback to you and WGBH as well as information that will prove helpful in the marketing phase.

Sincerely yours,



Patricia Wheeler  
Professional Associate  
Research and Advisory Services

PW:jj

enclosure

cc: Mr. Kenneth Harms, FWL  
Ms. Sonja Bollinger, ETS  
Ms. Pat Rau, ETS  
Dr. Terri Strand, ETS  
Dr. Eileen Peters, ETS

DEVELOP CURRICULUM MATERIALS WHICH WILL HELP TO USE TELEVISION  
AS A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

|                            | OPTION A           |                    |         | OPTION B                   | OPTION C                   |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
|                            | PHASE I—TASK 2     |                    | Total   | PHASE I                    | PHASE I                    |
|                            | Oct., 78—Sept., 79 | Oct., 79—Sept., 80 |         | Oct., 1978—<br>Sept., 1979 | Oct., 1978—<br>Sept., 1979 |
| 1. ETS Project Staff Cost: |                    |                    |         |                            |                            |
| Evaluator (Wheeler)        | 6,054              | 7,123              | 13,177  | 10,193                     | 11,955                     |
| Co-Evaluator (Strand)      | 3,936              | 9,376              | 13,312  | 7,378                      | 9,053                      |
| Res. Asst. (Powells)       | 2,040              | 3,938              | 5,978   | 3,508                      | 5,260                      |
| " " (Taylor)               | 1,871              | 3,131              | 5,002   | —                          | —                          |
| Prof. Asst. (Peters)       | 1,978              | —                  | 1,978   | 5,170                      | 6,971                      |
| Secretarial Support        | 1,916              | 5,877              | 7,793   | 4,058                      | 5,654                      |
| Field Coordinators:        |                    |                    |         |                            |                            |
| " " (Mercado)              | 1,140              | 2,850              | 3,990   | —                          | —                          |
| " " (Glad)                 | 692                | 1,731              | 2,423   | —                          | —                          |
| " " (Powells)              | 630                | 1,577              | 2,207   | 1,017                      | 1,902                      |
| " " (Hood)                 | 1,140              | 2,850              | 3,990   | —                          | —                          |
| " " (Hirabayashi)          | 552                | 1,382              | 1,934   | 1,302                      | 2,398                      |
| " " (Assistant)            | 940                | 9,394              | 10,334  | 5,466                      | 7,949                      |
| Total ETS Staff Cost       | 22,889             | 49,229             | 72,118  | 38,092                     | 51,142                     |
| 2. Data Processing         | —                  | 5,500              | 5,500   | —                          | —                          |
| 3. Honorarium—Teacher      | —                  | —                  | —       | 2,100                      | 3,450                      |
| " —Faculty                 | —                  | —                  | —       | 450                        | 450                        |
| 4. Travel:                 |                    |                    |         |                            |                            |
| Air                        | 1,050              | 350                | 1,400   | 1,050                      | 1,050                      |
| Subsistence                | 750                | 400                | 1,150   | 300                        | 300                        |
| Travel to Sites            | 1,000              | 5,000              | 6,000   | 2,010                      | 2,010                      |
| Teacher—Travel             | —                  | —                  | —       | —                          | 700                        |
| 5. Other Direct Charges:   |                    |                    |         |                            |                            |
| Postage, Phone             | 1,100              | 2,500              | 3,600   | 1,050                      | 1,500                      |
| Printing, Proj. Matls.     | 1,450              | 2,500              | 3,950   | 700                        | 1,100                      |
| 6. Total Direct Cost       | 28,239             | 65,479             | 93,718  | 45,752                     | 61,702                     |
| 7. Gen'l. Administrative   | 6,867              | 14,768             | 21,635  | 11,576                     | 15,815                     |
| 8. Total Cost              | 35,106             | 80,247             | 115,353 | 57,328                     | 77,517                     |
| 9. Fixed Fee               | 2,106              | 4,815              | 6,921   | 3,440                      | 4,651                      |
| 10. Total Budget           | 37,212             | 85,062             | 122,274 | 60,768                     | 82,168                     |

Use or disclosure of project information and data is subject to the restriction on the page following the title page of this proposal



Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development  
Contract 300-78-0495  
Budget Schedule For Evaluation Plans

|                           | PHASE I        |        |              | PHASE II       |           |              | TOTAL PHASES I & II |          |              |
|---------------------------|----------------|--------|--------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|---------------------|----------|--------------|
|                           | Current Budget | Change | Total Budget | Current Budget | Change    | Total Budget | Current Budget      | Change   | Total Budget |
| <u>Option A (Current)</u> |                |        |              |                |           |              |                     |          |              |
| Direct Costs              | 164,210        | -0-    | 164,210      | 163,437        | -0-       | 163,437      | 327,647             | -0-      | 327,647      |
| General & Admin.          | 33,313         | -0-    | 33,313       | 33,017         | -0-       | 33,017       | 66,330              | -0-      | 66,330       |
| Total Estimated Costs     | 197,523        | -0-    | 197,523      | 196,454        | -0-       | 196,454      | 393,977             | -0-      | 393,977      |
| Fee                       | 10,469         | -0-    | 10,469       | 10,412         | -0-       | 10,412       | 20,881              | -0-      | 20,881       |
| Total Cost & Fee          | 207,992        | -0-    | 207,992      | 206,866        | -0-       | 206,866      | 414,858             | -0-      | 414,858      |
| <u>Option B</u>           | *****          |        |              | *****          |           |              | *****               |          |              |
| Direct Costs              | 164,210        | 23,556 | 187,766      | 163,437        | (85,062)  | 78,375       | 327,647             | (61,506) | 266,141      |
| General & Admin.          | 33,313         | 3,157  | 36,470       | 33,017         | (11,398)  | 21,619       | 66,330              | (8,241)  | 58,089       |
| Total Estimated Costs     | 197,523        | 26,713 | 224,236      | 196,454        | (96,460)  | 99,994       | 343,977             | (69,747) | 324,230      |
| Fee                       | 10,469         | 1,416  | 11,885       | 10,412         | (5,112)   | 5,300        | 20,881              | (3,696)  | 17,185       |
| Total Cost & Fee          | 207,992        | 28,129 | 236,121      | 206,866        | (101,572) | 105,294      | 414,858             | (73,443) | 341,415      |
| <u>Option C</u>           | *****          |        |              | *****          |           |              | *****               |          |              |
| Direct Costs              | 164,210        | 44,956 | 209,166      | 163,437        | (85,062)  | 78,375       | 327,647             | (40,106) | 287,541      |
| General & Admin.          | 33,313         | 6,024  | 39,337       | 33,017         | (11,398)  | 21,619       | 66,330              | (5,374)  | 60,956       |
| Total Estimated Costs     | 197,523        | 50,980 | 248,503      | 196,454        | (96,460)  | 99,994       | 393,977             | (45,480) | 348,497      |
| Fee                       | 10,469         | 2,702  | 13,171       | 10,412         | (5,112)   | 5,300        | 20,881              | (2,410)  | 18,471       |
| Total Cost & Fee          | 207,992        | 53,682 | 261,674      | 206,866        | (101,572) | 105,294      | 414,858             | (47,890) | 366,968      |



Revised Evaluation Plan:  
Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum

Because of time and financial constraints, ETS will hire a panel of teachers and curriculum experts from throughout the United States to review the student and teacher materials. Also, they will ask about ten families to review the family guide.

Description of the Sample

We plan to hire 34 teachers and curriculum specialists: 10 from the northeast, 10 from the midwest, 4 from the south, and 10 from the west-southwest. They will represent different types of communities (urban-suburban-rural), curriculum areas (language arts, social studies, audio visual), and student groups (SES levels, ethnic groups). Because of the low number of reviewers, we will attempt to identify persons who have already had experience teaching this or a similar course at the senior high school level; they could be expected to better evaluate such things as the feasibility of implementing some of the activities and other materials which should be included in the curriculum. The teachers and curriculum specialists will receive \$400 for reviewing the entire curriculum and completing the evaluation forms.

We will also identify a sample of about ten volunteer families from different types of communities and ask them to review the family guide.

Instrumentation

For teachers and curriculum specialists:

- Rating scales for each part of each unit of the curriculum (e.g., readings, thermofax, activity)
- A rating scale at end of each of the seven units
- A questionnaire covering demographic information, packaging, and marketability of curriculum, curriculum format, etc.

For parents:

- A parent interview, similar to the one in the Quarterly Report by Donna Lloyd-Kolkin dated January 10, 1979.

Analysis and Reporting

For each reviewer, we will prepare a three-ring binder. The curriculum materials, developed by WGBH will be on the left side. On the right side will be our rating scale for the materials on that page and room for comments. The report submitted to FWL and WGBH will consist of a binder similar to the

one sent to teachers, with mean ratings and a summary of comments (on the right) opposite the curriculum materials (on the left) to which they pertain. In addition, a summary report will be prepared for each unit (providing an overview of the reviewers' reactions to that unit) and an evaluation report for the entire curriculum (describing the sample, data collection procedures, marketability, format, etc.). A report will also be prepared on the family guide.

#### Time Line and Deliverables

- May 1 ETS receives 50 typed copies of the curriculum from WGBH. They should not be collated, but rather in sets of 50 copies of each page, and should not be printed back-to-back. ETS will punch them for three-ring binders after printing the rating forms on the back sides of each page.
- May 15 ETS will have completed identification of reviewers and will distribute binders to teachers and curriculum specialists.
- June 22 Teachers and curriculum specialists will return binders with completed forms to ETS.
- July 9 ETS will start submitting feedback to WGBH and FWL as the reviews for each unit are completed to provide more time for revisions to be made where needed.
- July 23 ETS will have sent summary reports for all seven units and the evaluation report covering the entire curriculum to FWL and WGBH.
- July 2 WGBH will deliver 20 copies of the family guide to ETS.
- July 5 ETS will distribute the family guide to parents.
- July 31 ETS will send an evaluation report on the family guide to FWL and WGBH.

#### Budget

Our actual expenses through February were \$4,971. We estimate about \$526 in expenses in March. Our projected costs for April through September are \$31,715 (see attached revised budget). These three figures total to \$37,212, the amount of the Phase One contract in our original proposal.

*Patricia Wheeler*

Patricia Wheeler  
Educational Testing Service  
1947 Center Street  
Berkeley, California 94704  
March 29, 1979

Revised Budget

4/1/79 - 9/30/79

| <u>Personnel Costs:</u> *                 | <u>Hours</u> | <u>Dollars</u>         |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| P. Wheeler, Project Director              | 95           | \$ 2,758               |
| T. Strand, Project Co-Director            | 75           | 1,911                  |
| E. Peters, Project Associate              | 50           | 1,708                  |
| Research Assistant-Berkeley               | 100          | 1,563                  |
| Research Assistant-Evanston               | 50           | 979                    |
| Secretary                                 | 100          | <u>1,459</u>           |
| Subtotal                                  |              | <u>\$10,378</u>        |
| <br><u>Evaluation Panel Honorarium:</u> * |              | <br><u>\$17,612</u>    |
| <br><u>Other Direct Costs:</u>            |              |                        |
| Travel (ETS to FWL or WGBH)               |              | \$ 180                 |
| Communication (Telephone, Postage)        |              | 850                    |
| Printing, Supplies                        |              | <u>900</u>             |
| Subtotal                                  |              | <u>\$ 1,930</u>        |
| <br>Total Costs                           |              | <br>\$29,920           |
| Fixed Fee                                 |              | <u>1,795</u>           |
| Total Budget                              |              | <u><u>\$31,715</u></u> |

\* Includes general administrative overhead.

FORMATIVE REVIEW OF THE FAMILY  
GUIDE ON CRITICAL TELEVISION  
VIEWING SKILLS

by

Judith Bonnett Hirabayashi  
Roni Simon

August 1979

Educational Testing Service  
1947 Center Street  
Berkeley, California 94704



## PREFACE

The research reported herein was pursuant to a contract with the Far West Lab and the Office of Education, of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to express their appreciation to the Project Director at Far West Lab, Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, who was most pleasant to work with and cooperated in completing this review within one month.

Special thanks go to ETS staff, Nancy Castille and Bob Allen for their support.

The seven families who provided quality feedback on ways to improve the impact of the family guide on the television viewing habits of American families deserve special recognition for their efforts.

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## INTRODUCTION

A formative review of the draft version of the family guide on critical television viewing skills was conducted by Educational Testing Service under contract with Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development. The review utilized feedback from seven families who used the guide for one week and was conducted in August 1979 in California.

The family guide was developed by the Far West Lab and Boston public television station, WGBH, under contract with the Division of Educational Technology of the U.S. Office of Education. It is designed to either supplement the innovative high school curriculum, tentatively entitled "Television: A Course of Study", or to be used independently of it. (The curriculum for high school students was also developed by the Far West Lab and WGBH under the same contract with USOE. A separate report on the findings of the formative review of the high school curriculum by 35 educators has been prepared by ETS and submitted to the curriculum developers.)

The family guide, printed in draft form, is an eight-page document, presenting information, opinions, and activities designed to stimulate family discussions regarding the use of television in the home. This is presented as a series of activities and readings, controversial quotations, charting of viewing practices of family members (How Much Do You Watch?), a series of questions (What's Your TVQ?), family discussion topics (Let's Face It), and short readings (Is it Live or Taped, Keep Your Antennae Up!). A copy of the family guide is provided in the Appendix of this report.

The purpose of the formative review is to contribute to the development of the final edition of the family guide by providing reactions and feedback from members of seven families representing different communities, ethnic groups, and income levels. The family guide is to be promoted and disseminated on a national basis in the near future; the review process has been directed



toward maximizing the impact of the family guide on improving the viewing habits of American families with teenaged children.

## FORMATIVE REVIEW PROCESS

### Designing and Planning the Formative Review Process

Several constraints relating to time made it necessary to complete the review of the "Family Guide" with nine or fewer families within the month of August. The ETS Berkeley office received a copy of the draft of the Family Guide the first week of August and was to complete the report of the formative review by the end of the month. The families participating in the review were required to use the guide for one full week during this period.

A Parent Interview instrument was developed by ETS staff for completion by nine parents--one from each family--following their use of the family guide for one week.

### Identification of Reviewers

The goal of the formative review process was to obtain feedback on the family guide from a variety of perspectives. With this in mind, staff members looked for families with high school students that represented a multiplicity of ethnic groups, family sizes, kinds of family (single-parent, two-parent), educational and economic levels, and types of communities.

Sources of information used to identify potential reviewers of the family guide were (1) families already known to ETS staff members and (2) families recommended by those families known to ETS staff members. Telephone contact was made to each family to confirm their interest and willingness to cooperate.

Of the nine families selected to review the guide, two were unable to respond to the interview questions as either the parent or high school-age child were unexpectedly away from home during the week of family participation. The remaining seven families became the final sample of

reviewers. They include members of several ethnic groups: Black, Mexican, Chinese, and White. Both single-parent and two-parent families are represented. The children's ages spanned pre-school to college-age children living at home.

Five reviewers resided in the San Francisco Bay Area, one in Northern California, one in Southern California. Table 1 summarizes the families' characteristics.

#### Development of the Parent Interview Instrument

Taking into consideration the purpose of the formative review process, which was to collect and provide relevant feedback to the curriculum developers, staff members designed an informal interview which was to be conducted by a staff member with one parent from each of the families. The Parent Interview instrument was designed to elicit the reactions, opinions and suggestions of the parents regarding the practicality and appeal of each of the activities and readings in the guide. Additionally, parents were asked to recommend feasible promotion and distribution strategies.

A draft version of the Parent Interview instrument was pretested with a small number of ETS Berkeley Office staff members who had read the family guide. The revised questions, as they were asked in the interview, appear in the next section of this report under "Results."

#### Data Collection and Synthesis

Each family had initially been contacted by the telephone in order to verify their interest and willingness to cooperate in the review of the family guide. This was done in the first part of August. A time was then scheduled for the parent interview. Three interviews were conducted in person, the others over the telephone.

By August 10, each family had received a copy of the draft version of the family guide, a letter of explanation and some background information

regarding the critical high school viewing skills curriculum. Each family was asked to use the family guide during the week of August 13, and to note any reactions by any family member to the guide which they might want to comment on later.

The interviews were completed by August 26. Responses to each question asked were recorded by hand during the interview. They were then consolidated for comparison and synthesis. Additional comments and suggestions made directly onto the reviewer's copy of the family guide were also incorporated in the results, provided in the next section of this report.



TABLE 1  
Characteristics of Families  
(Number of Families = 7)

| Characteristic                           | Number |
|------------------------------------------|--------|
| Ethnicity of Family:                     |        |
| Non-minority                             | 4      |
| Minority                                 | 1      |
| Mixed                                    | 2      |
| Residence of Family:                     |        |
| Medium/Large City                        | 4      |
| Small City                               | 1      |
| Suburb                                   | 2      |
| Family Income:                           |        |
| Low (under \$10,000)                     | 0      |
| Middle (\$10,000-\$30,000)               | 6      |
| High (over \$30,000)                     | 1      |
| Highest Education of Parent(s)           |        |
| High School                              | 4      |
| College                                  | 4      |
| Graduate School                          | 4      |
| Types of families:                       |        |
| Two-parent                               | 5      |
| Single-parent                            | 2      |
| Number of family members living in home: |        |
| Father                                   | 6      |
| Mother                                   | 6      |
| Children:                                | 20     |
| Infant - Grade 3                         | 3      |
| Grades 4 - 8                             | 5      |
| Grades 9 - 12                            | 11     |
| College                                  | 1      |

## RESULTS

A summary of the responses of the seven reviewer families to the interview questions is given below. General conclusions and recommendations follow in the next section.

- *Did you or anyone else in your family make use of the Family Guide? Who did the activities? Who discussed the guide?*

The guide was used and/or discussed by a total of 10 adults, 9 high school students and 1 younger student. At least one parent from each family read the guide; however only two interviewees reported that their entire families did all the activities together and then discussed them. The other five interviewees offered various reasons for their less-than-complete participation. One teenager did not find the materials interesting; several others were busy and seldom home. The father interviewed noted that he had seen his daughter only four hours in the last week.

- *What was your overall impression of the guide? Was it appealing? Was it practical?*

All interviewees thought the idea behind the guide was appealing. And most found the draft copy "interesting", "valuable", and/or "thought-provoking". One mother whose children watch nearly 40 hours of television a week commented that it made her "think about watching the TV viewing of my kids--especially violence--so we'll discuss things." A teacher commented that she found it interesting as an educator. However, several reviewers took this opportunity to comment that an implicit assumption in the guide is that TV is of high interest to teenagers, but that their own children simply were not very involved with TV and therefore would not be particularly interested in the guide.

Opinion on the practicality of the guide was mixed. Three parents noted that it is difficult to talk to teenagers because they are busy,

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independent and not especially interested in their parents' opinions. Another parent, who thought the idea was appealing and the draft version practical, commented that her teenagers were "a little silly about it" and that it was "hard to get straight answers".

Two parents noted that the draft format needs a lot more work. One of them characterized it as "choppy".

*• Did the quotes catch your attention? That of your high school age children?*

Six of the seven interviewees said the quotes were interesting to them. One especially liked the student quote; one emphatically liked the Allen quote and one strongly disagreed with it. No one mentioned the Moyers' quotation specifically.

Several reviewers said the quotes either were not read by, or interesting to, their teenagers. The one teacher thought the quotes were too long and that "you've already lost non-readers, you should ham it up; you need cartoons."

*• Did the three paragraphs at the bottom of the page encourage you to use the family guide: How about your high school students?*

No one gave a resounding "yes" to this question. The strongest positive statement was that "anyone who is interested in TV would be interested." Most reviewers simply did not find the paragraphs stimulating, but one reviewer added that having raised four older children, she has already thought about her family's television viewing habits, so the paragraphs did not seem to be directed to her.

*• Did you find the guide easy to understand? How about your high school students?*

All reviewers and their high-school age children found the guide generally easy to understand. The overall intent, however, was not clear to one teenager and another "poo-pooed the whole idea". Several specific

improvements suggested by reviewers are reported later in this report.

- *What was your reaction to "How much do you watch?"? Who filled out the chart? Did you and your family talk about it? Who participated in the discussion?*

More family members filled out the chart than discussed their answers. A few families kept records through the week, but in most families the mother collected the information based on the family's recollections. When asked whether his or her family discussed this activity (and those following), nearly every interviewee recounted circumstances that made the review week more hectic than usual, precluding a lengthy discussion. In only two families was a leisurely discussion initiated, wherein parents and children compared viewing habits and opinions. Interestingly, the five reviewers whose families were busy or scattered were all somewhat apologetic or perhaps embarrassed that their families' life styles made such discussions rare; one said we may all still hold "Ozzie and Harriet" as our models of how family life ought to be conducted.

Five of the seven interviewees made generally positive comments about this activity, focussing on its value in stimulating an assessment of individual and family viewing habits. Several were surprised at how much they watch TV. The exercise reminded one mother that her children watch more TV, with less supervision, during the summer than during the winter.

The two interviewees who did not rate the activity highly characterized themselves and their children as light viewers. One said she "didn't learn anything;" the other said he would not have done it except for his commitment as a reviewer. However, he then added that to assure maximum usage of the activity, it should be assigned as a take-home research project at school.

Review of the completed guides reveals some deficiencies in the format of this activity. Figure 1, one family's completed activity sheet, illustrates several problems. There ought to be space for weekly totals for



FIGURE 1

## HOW MUCH DO YOU WATCH?

Let's find out how much TV you and other members of your family watch in an average week. Use this form to fill in the total hours you spend viewing each day, and then total up your hours for the week.

## FAMILY MEMBERS

|           | TEACE | KIMMIN | TEDD | KENNAH |  |  |  | TOTAL  |
|-----------|-------|--------|------|--------|--|--|--|--------|
| Monday    | 3     | 3      | 5    | 5      |  |  |  | 22 Hrs |
| Tuesday   | 3     | 3      | 5    | 5      |  |  |  | 27 Hrs |
| Wednesday | 3     | 3      | 5    | 5      |  |  |  | 39 Hrs |
| Thursday  | 2     | 2      | 4    | 4      |  |  |  | 39 Hrs |
| Friday    | 2     | 2      | 4    | 4      |  |  |  |        |
| Saturday  | 7     | 7      | 8    | 8      |  |  |  |        |
| Sunday    | 7     | 7      | 8    | 8      |  |  |  |        |

27 27 39 39 **Total 132 Hrs.**

Monday - Great hall  
 Tuesday - Happyday - Lorne & Shirley  
 Wed - Charlie Angles, Luge, News  
 Thursday - What the Results Mean...  
 Friday - Love boat - Johnny's Island

(You may also wish to record the names of shows you watched for the week. If so, try to keep track of those programs that all or most of your family watched together).

They could mean many different things. To find out, consider these questions:

- Were you surprised by the time you spent with television? Was it less or more than you thought? *more*
- Do you remember times when the set was just "on," with no one watching? If so, why was it left on? *To hear something else in house*
- How much time was TV viewing a family activity? What kinds of shows were popular with everyone? Which shows were not? *news*
- Did you talk about those shows you watched as a family? What kinds of discussion did you have? *yes. Always. about what the story meant to each of us. or did it have any meaning at all.*
- Did you use your newspaper TV listings or TV GUIDE in helping you choose what to watch? Or did you just turn on the set to see what was on? *(TV guide)*
- Would you want to change the way TV is part of your family's life? If so, how? *more family programs like Love boat - is enough*

If, for one day, you could step into the shoes of a television hero or heroine, who would you be, and why?

each family member and for the family as a whole. Moreover, space should be left so the shows watched can be recorded more systematically. One reviewer suggested that the hours of the day that the TV is watched, as well as the number of hours, is of interest and helps viewers more carefully consider alternative activities for the hours of heaviest viewing.

*\* What was your reaction to the "hero or heroine" activity?*

Interviewees said this activity needs to be better highlighted; several families had not noticed it. One family enjoyed it, especially their 6-year old. One reviewer, whose family did not notice the question, said she thought teenagers would find this fantasizing activity to be stimulating, and that the activity should be better developed and expanded.

*\* What was your reaction to "What's your TVQ?" Who answered the questions? Are the answers clear? Did the family talk about it?*

In two families, only the parents completed this activity, in one just the children did it, and in the other four, all members of the family answered the questions and then compared their answers.

Reaction to the activity as a whole was positive. It was interesting and challenging to both parents and teenagers. One reviewer commented that people generally like to answer multiple-choice questions so they can "see how they did."

Several reviewers commented about particular items:

- "Most people would know the answer to 1, 2 and 3. 4, 5 and 9 were surprising.
- "3 and 4 were interesting. 8 was confusing."
- "4 sounded set-up. 'Bingo' made my kids giggle."

Two reviewers commented that the negatively worded items (5, 6, 8, 9) were confusing. One interviewee suggested that these questions be rephrased as true-false items.

All reviewers found the answers clear. One teenager drew the half-

serious conclusion that since she and her family didn't do too well, it means they don't watch too much TV.

*\*What was your reaction to the activity "Let's Face It!"?*

This activity was completed by both parents and children in three of the seven families. In two families just the parent(s) answered it; in one, only the children did it; and in one family no one did.

The item elicited thoughtful criticisms from several parents. One parent noted that the two opposing statements on each issue represented extreme positions which "didn't have much to do with the way we watch." The second pair of opposites, for example, assumes that parents and their children usually disagree about what to watch. Several reviewers pointed out that this is not necessarily true. Moreover, several pairs assume that the family usually watches the same television. It should be noted that in three of our seven families, there was more than one TV in the house.

Another parent felt that the two extremes of each pair were not true opposites and suggested rephrasing the activity as "agree-disagree" scales. This same parent found the activity "frustrating" because she thought there were clearly right and wrong answers for each pair and she did not like what she thought was an anti-TV bias.

A third parent thought the questions themselves were very good, but felt that the activity ought to be reformatted so more than one or two people could legibly mark their answers.

Judging by the reviewer comments, this activity does seem to need reworking. However, even in its present form, it is generally appealing to reviewers as a stimulus to family discussions.

*\*What was your reaction to the reading, "Is it live or on tape?"? Did you and your family talk about it?*

Four families discussed the reading and one other parent contributed

comments. In one family no one did the activity; in another the children did the activity but did not discuss it with their mothers. Three reviewers commented that it was "interesting"; a fourth had "not much reaction".

Comments were made about several of the statements:

- One reviewer appreciated having the information about female roles pointed out.
- The information about TV violence stimulated some discussion in one family. Another family found it preachy and disagreed with it.
- While one parent thought the last point, that problems are generally not solved in one hour, was obvious, one teenager had not thought about it before.
- The last statement about family life on TV being "almost too good to be true" was refuted by one parent who said it fairly realistically reflected her own family's experience.

This reading elicited somewhat fewer comments than the previous three, perhaps because the reader was not asked to do anything with the information. Suggested activities should be provided.

*\* What was your reaction to "Keep your antennae up!"?*

Reviewers had little to say about this page; none reported that it stimulated much family discussion. Several reviewers speculated on the reason it was not very interesting. One said it might be useful for opening a discussion in a family which had never talked about TV, but in her own family, TV-related issues had generally already been dealt with while older children were growing up. Another thought that basically, families would be particularly interested in learning about themselves, and that this page, as compared to "How Much Do You Watch", for example, contributes little to that knowledge. The reading's effectiveness in its present form is questionable.

*\* Have you ever done anything on the subject of television like this before with your family?*

This question was the first of several questions about the "Family



Guide" as a whole. Although most of the reviewer families have occasional informal discussions about TV, only one parent had ever answered a similar questionnaire (in an opinion research survey).

- *How important do you think the Family Guide would be to families with teenage children? Would you recommend it to friends and neighbors with teenage children? Why/why not?*

Responses to these questions brought into focus several general problems with the guide.

- Families with teenagers may not be the ideal target group. Four of the parents suggested aiming the activities at families with younger children whose values have not been formed, who are more interested in their parents' opinions, and who probably watch more TV than teenagers. They were in general agreement that a guide like this could best be used by families with children in the fifth through seventh grades. The family with the third grader learned more about her habits than anyone else's.
- The guide assumes that the reader is relatively naive about TV. One reviewer commented "there's nothing new here" for her family.
- The guide also assumes that families disagree about TV usage. In several families, consensus has been reached, there are several TV's, or strategies for dealing with conflicts have already been worked out. This decreases the guide's perceived usefulness.
- The guide assumes that TV is at least important, and probably intrusive, in most households. Several of the interviewers disagreed, and therefore found limited value in the guide.

Three reviewers said they would recommend the guide to other families. One parent whose family spent quite a bit of time doing the activities in the guide said they had a "terrific time doing it", that parents should be aware of what their kids are watching, and that this guide helped them become more aware of family habits. Her family watches a lot of TV, has several TV sets and a relatively low educational level. The less positive reviewers generally reported less heavy TV viewing habits and had somewhat higher education levels. The sample of reviewers is certainly too small to draw any conclusions from this comparison, but it is provocative.

- *In what ways could the guide be improved? Are there any topics not covered that should be?*

All the interviewees contributed suggestions in response to these questions. Those relevant to particular activities have been incorporated above; more general suggestions, which are sometimes contradictory, are:

- Include more materials on advertising awareness, TV violence and the production aspects of TV (e.g., where does the money come from to produce a show).
- Direct the guide to students who will bring it home [from school] to the parents. Make it less stuffy and give students more opportunity to answer questions about themselves.
- Make the guide more individual-oriented [because families do not discuss things.]
- Rewrite the guide so it is not as slanted in opinions [against TV]. There was nothing that pointed out that TV can be watched for different reasons or that affirmed its entertainment value. Include material on such potential uses of TV as educating and enlightening the population at large about social problems.
- If the guide is distributed from school, add more thought-provoking questions. If it appears in a magazine, only "How Much Do You Watch" needs to be retained.
- To encourage critical viewing, suggest that the family selects a program to watch together with certain questions in mind.
- Include specific information on how to make your opinions known in order to change TV.
- Include discussion questions suitable for church groups or other groups which might want to discuss TV.

- *What title would you or your family suggest for the guide?*

Interviewees tended to be reluctant to take time to respond to this question. However, one suggested "Family Guide to TV Watching"; another thought "What's your TVQ" was a clever title if the guide appears as an article.

- *How do you think the guide should be made available to parents? At a cost? How much would you be willing to pay?*

Five interviewees thought the guide should be distributed through the schools, possibly as homework in a social science class. It was thought

that families would be more likely to carry out the activities if they were assigned by a teacher. Several parents took this opportunity to question again whether the guide should not be directed to families with younger children.

Three parents also mentioned TV Guide as an appropriate vehicle, McCall's and Parents' magazines were each suggested once, as were "church groups or other groups already interested in [TV-related issues]."

One interviewee thought people might be willing to pay up to \$1 for the guide if it were distributed on grocery store newstands. Others tended to envision it as a free school handout.

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With so few reviewers, it would be inappropriate to draw conclusions about how families throughout the country would react to the family guides. However, a general strategy for evaluating the various suggestions and making changes can be recommended.

- First, re-examine the activities and information presented in the guide to identify their imbedded assumptions about family viewing habits and interactive styles. Does the target family necessarily watch a lot of TV? Is the family nonselective in program choices and naive about television as a business? Do its members disagree frequently on program choices? Do the family members have the time and/or inclination to discuss TV as a family group? Interviewees perceived this hypothetical family as the intended audience.
- Then, carefully define the target audience. Interviewees suggested the materials might be better directed to families with children in the fifth through seventh grades.
- At the same time, decide whether to use a popular magazine or a social science curriculum as the vehicle for disseminating the materials. Based on the results, if it is decided to direct the guide to families with teenagers, an argument can be made for using these activities to supplement a social science curriculum at the high school level. Given the reluctance of many teenagers to engage in substantive discussions with their parents, and the contemporary pace of life, general questions about TV viewing habits and knowledge might be best discussed in a classroom setting.



- Finally, revamp the materials to more closely meet your target audience's needs, better utilizing the specific attributes of the dissemination vehicle chosen. Family discussions involving teenagers seem to be most strongly encouraged by activities that involve comparisons of answers to specific questions, and teenagers in particular respond well to materials which capitalize on their curiosity about themselves.

If the information is presented in a popular magazine, the activities should probably be more individual-oriented than those in the draft copy. If the materials supplement the high-school curriculum, careful consideration should be given to which materials can be most fruitfully discussed at home and which at school.

Any revisions should recast the reading materials into a format to elicit the most active responses possible.

Responses to the very first question to the reviewers, "What was your overall impression of the Family Guide?" clearly document sufficient interest in the concept underlying the draft version to warrant revision efforts and dissemination.

## APPENDIX

Draft Version of the Family Guide

# DRAFT

Once I thought the most important political statement we could make about television was to turn it off. But television can instruct, inform, and inspire, as well as distract, distort, and demean. And turning it off rejects the good with the bad. My family wants its voice added to the summons for quality, and I urge you to speak up, too, in every way possible. This marvelous medium, with all its potential for laughter and light, is worth fighting for.

Bill Moyers, television  
reporter

When you start hearing Barbara Walters talking about mass murder like it's a batch of oatmeal cookies, it's going to affect you.

California high school student

You know why they call television a medium?  
Because nothing on it is ever well-done.

Fred Allen, television  
comic of the 40's and 50's

---

## FAMILY GUIDE

More than 98% of American homes are equipped with television. Four out of five have color TV, and about half have more than one set. In the average American home, the set is on almost six and a quarter hours a day. And, it's been shown, the larger the family, the longer the TV set is on.

Television, it seems, has become the indispensable American medium. We watch a lot of it. But do we watch too much? Do we use TV positively in our family life, or does TV use us?

Try some of the following exercises with your family. We hope that you'll have the opportunity to learn a little more about TV and how it fits into your life.

## HOW MUCH DO YOU WATCH?

Let's find out how much TV you and other members of your family watch in an average week. Use this form to fill in the total hours you spend viewing each day, and then total up your hours for the week.

### FAMILY MEMBERS

| Monday    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Tuesday   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

(You may also wish to record the names of shows you watched for the week. If so, try to keep track of those programs that all or most of your family watched together).

### WHAT THE RESULTS MEAN ...

They could mean many different things. To find out, consider these questions:

- Were you surprised by the time you spent with television? Was it less or more than you thought?
- Do you remember times when the set was just "on," with no one watching? If so, why was it left on?
- How much time was TV viewing a family activity? What kinds of shows were popular with everyone? Which shows were not?
- Did you talk about those shows you watched as a family? What kinds of discussion did you have?
- Did you use your newspaper TV listings or TV GUIDE in helping you choose what to watch? Or did you just turn on the set to see what was on?
- Would you want to change the way TV is part of your family's life? If so, how?

If, for one day, you could step into the shoes of a television hero or heroine, who would you be, and why?



## WHAT'S YOUR TVQ?

How much do you know about TV? Not about the programs -- or the stars -- but about the industry and the habit. Answers to some of these questions may surprise you, but they're the kind of thing that top TV executives think about when they make programming decisions.

Give yourself 10 points for each correct answer and then figure out your TVQ!

1. On a typical Sunday night, one out of every two Americans is
  - a. at the movies
  - b. watching television
  - c. knitting sweaters
  - d. reading
2. If you're a member of an average TV household, your tube is on more than
  - a. 40 hours a week
  - b. 50 hours a week
  - c. 60 hours a week
  - d. 70 hours a week
3. You're the ad manager for a new perfume called "Thirty Love," designed to appeal to active women ages 18-34 with its heady, sporty fragrance. To buy thirty seconds of commercial time on a top-rated prime time show, you will have to spend about
  - a. \$8500
  - b. \$15,000
  - c. \$25,000
  - d. \$40,000
4. You've just manufactured a banana-flavored soft drink called "Bingo" and you want to run a series of commercials showing everyday people comparing Bingo to other leading soft drinks. What is the position of the Federal Trade Commission (the agency that regulates television advertising) in regard to your ad campaign?
  - a. the FTC encourages this kind of advertising because it believes these commercials, when truthful, let people know about product differences.
  - b. the FTC discourages such ads.
  - c. the FTC allows you to run the ad, as long as you do not mention your competitor's name.
  - d. the FTC prohibits such ads.

5. Which of the following is NOT usually true of the typical television hero:
  - a. he resorts to violence only when he has to
  - b. he is good looking, white and in his 30's
  - c. his beliefs often differ from those with great wealth or political power
  - d. he is married.
6. It has been shown that watching a lot of television colors the way people look at the world. Which of the following has NOT been shown?
  - a. adult heavy viewers are much more likely than light viewers to own guns for protection.
  - b. heavy viewers who are children are more likely to think it's "all right to hit someone if you're mad at them" than light viewers.
  - c. in Hawaii, heavy viewers are better drivers than light viewers.
  - d. heavy viewers are more likely to be afraid of walking city streets alone at night than light viewers.
7. If the people listed below were in your family, who would be the one most likely to watch the most TV according to Nielsen statistics?
 

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| a. Annie, age 8  | c. Morton, age 29 |
| b. Henry, age 15 | d. Rhoda, age 59  |
8. The A. C. Nielsen Company measures our TV viewing habits. Their Storage Instantaneous Audimeter -- known to some as the "little black box" -- is installed in about 1170 homes and results in "ratings" which determine which shows stay on the air and which are taken off. Which of the following is NOT true about this device?
  - a. it records only when the TV set is on, and to which channel it is tuned.
  - b. Nielsen pays families to have the Audimeter installed in their homes.
  - c. the identities of these families are kept secret.
  - d. the information gathered from these households measures the viewing habits in all American homes accurately.
9. If you owned a television station, your license to operate would come up for renewal every three years. The Federal Communications Commission is the regulatory agency which oversees this process. Which of the following is NOT an FCC guideline or law affecting approval of your license application?
  - a. you should devote at least one hour out of 12 to public affairs programs such as news, talk shows, and consumer shows.
  - b. you should give "reasonable" time to important community issues and treat them "fairly."
  - c. your station should produce at least two hours of its own programming daily.
  - d. if you sell a half hour of time to a political candidate, you must offer to sell a half hour of time to the opposing candidate.
10. Violence on television, cause for much debate over the past 25 years, hit its peak in 1976 and is now on the downswing. TRUE or FALSE.

## TV Q ANSWERS

1. b. In numbers, this means about 100 million people.
2. a. 43 1/2 hours, to be more precise.
3. d. The rule of thumb is that the more people who watch a show, the higher the price the network can charge to advertisers for buying time on the program. This has prompted the notion that television is a business that sells viewers to advertisers (not products to viewers).  
People in the 18-34 age bracket, by the way, are considered to be a prime advertising target because of their purchasing power.
4. a.
5. d. Most leading male TV characters are single. Interestingly, item c is generally true, indicating that we find appeal in characters who are in conflict with the top layers of established society.
6. c. In Hawaii, heavy television viewers were shown to be more reckless behind the wheel than light viewers.
7. d. Rhoda is in the heaviest-viewing group -- women, age 55 and older. Women in general watch more television than men. Teenagers watch the least amount of television, compared to other age groups.
8. d. The sampling can't be exact, and the Nielsen Company itself notes that ratings are really just estimates. Over a long period of time, however, a program's rating becomes more meaningful. Notice that the "little black box" can't tell if anyone's watching the set or, if they are, whether they're enjoying what they're seeing.
9. c. "a" is a guideline while "b" and "d" are strict regulations.
10. TRUE. Apparently, sponsors and TV executives have reacted to the public outcry against televised violence.

What's your TVQ? Give yourself 10 points for each correct answer:

- 90 - 100 points: Move over, Freddie Silverman!
- 70 - 80 points: You've got yourself a hit show!
- 50 - 60 points: Broadcasting may not be your "bag" but you've got good TV sense.
- 30 - 40 points: A lot to learn. There's more to TV than the on-off button.
- 0 - 20 points: Your show's been cancelled.

## LET'S FACE IT!

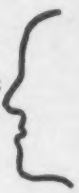
Television figures in family life in many different ways. Some of these issues appear below. Which way do you face? How does your position differ from that of other members of your family? Have each member of the family choose the number from 1 to 5 which best indicates where he or she stands. Then discuss your answers.



It's good for families to talk about the TV they watch. They can learn about each other.

1 2 3 4 5

It's bad. A lot of families just can't talk about what they see on TV without quarreling.




Our family often talks about what TV programs we all want to watch together.

1 2 3 4 5

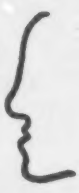
Not my family. Whoever screams the loudest decides what program to watch.




TV is a way of bringing our family together -- it's fun to share something together.

1 2 3 4 5

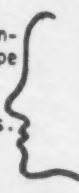
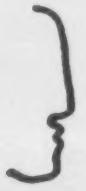
In our house TV is a good way for us to avoid each other. Turn on the set, sit down and stare at the screen.




We're careful about what we watch on TV. It's important to be selective, to know why you're watching a certain show.

1 2 3 4 5

TV is almost all entertainment. It's a way to escape problems, to give your mind a rest. Just turn it on and see what happens.

Most characters on TV family shows don't seem very real to me, even though they're "realistic." They may be enjoyable to watch, but they're exaggerated.

1 2 3 4 5

Characters on TV family shows are very real -- a lot like some of my friends and their families.




On the whole, I'd say my family could do with a lot less TV. There are other things we can do with our time that would be more valuable.

1 2 3 4 5

We need TV in our family. If we didn't have it, we'd all go nuts with each other.





## IS IT LIVE OR ON TAPE?

For a number of years, people have been studying what we see on television and comparing it all to what we see in the real world. Did you know ...

- Though about half the people in this country are women, only about a quarter of TV characters are female. And of those, an unusually large number are in the "young and attractive" category.
- Old people on TV are more often than not shown to be unsuccessful and unhappy.
- Glamorous careers are TV trademarks. Policemen, lawyers, doctors and others with exciting jobs are portrayed much more frequently than they appear in real life.
- Non-white males appear three times as often in comic roles as white males.
- While the number of violent acts on TV has declined over the last three years, hurting or killing someone is still shown to be an effective way to "solve" problems and conflicts (and keep viewers glued to their sets). Unfortunately many people -- especially young children -- learn some of their own behavior and standards from television and feel they, too, can resolve conflicts in this way.
- Family life on television is often shown to be almost too good to be true. The kids are cute and cuddly, the parents are patient and understanding, and when there's trouble, it's usually solved within an hour. For most of us, that's just not the way it is.

## KEEP YOUR ANTENNAE UP!

Commercial TV is a business that profits from drawing huge numbers of viewers. The more people who watch a program, the more money advertisers pay to reach them. Knowing that you are the "product" being sold (to sponsors) is an important first step in becoming a thoughtful and critical consumer of television. In the meantime, consider these points:

- o TV can be an effective tool in opening up communication in families and among friends. Don't be afraid to encourage conversation about some of the things you watch on TV together. There may be some bumps in the road, but you'll learn a few things, too. About each other.

- o People have different tastes in programs. Respect other people's opinions. There are no "right" or "wrong" shows to watch as long as people know why they're watching. (Is it an escape? Is it for information? For relaxation? Is TV a kind of companion? Or is it a way of avoiding communication with others?)

- o When you watch dramatic programs (situation comedies, westerns, police shows, soap operas, even cartoons), be critical about how things happen on TV as opposed to "real life."

- o When you're not happy about something you see on TV, there's more you can do than just turn off the set. Write to your local station or the companies that advertise on the program. Be clear and concise in your thoughts. Good letters are usually read and may make a difference. Don't hesitate to write letters of praise as well!!

## FINALLY. . .

Recent Gallup polls show that 31% of adults and 44% of teenagers believe they spend too much time watching television (far fewer than that believe they watch too little). Perhaps you're one of those who'd like to spend some of your TV time doing something else. Don't hesitate to take action, to make family and individual decisions. Chances are you'll be glad you did!

APPENDIX C

small publisher profile . . .

*(you need to keep this  
if we ask for copyright -  
proves we published &  
announced)*

Enrich Inc. (760 Kifer Rd., Synnyvale, CA 94086) got its start when an idea put forward by a former partner of company co-founder Henry Goldenberg was rejected. The turndown came from a now defunct educational materials company, which rejected the partner's idea for a smaller version of its teaching machine.

Armed with his partner's idea, Goldenberg launched Enrich in 1973 with the introduction of the TELOR Learning System, a programmed learning aid in math, science, phonics, language and reading for grades K-6. The system utilized a hand-held cartridge with 20 to 40 questions; the student has a choice of possible correct answers and when he chooses the right one, the next question appears.

After launching TELOR, Enrich moved into the metric field in a big way. In 1976, the company was chosen by the U.S. Office of Education to produce the Metric Survival Kit for teachers. Goldenberg estimates that over 60,000 teachers have used the kit, which teaches el-hi teachers the metric system.

By the time of its takeover by OHAUS in 1978, Enrich was the dominant supplier of metric materials to schools in North America, in both the manufacturing and publishing areas. Enrich produces everything from metric balances to rulers and metric measureme in both length and temperature.

In non-metric areas, Enrich, which competes with such companies as Trend, Milliken, Hayes and Ideal, is preparing for the introduction of 22 new books in a line called "activity poster books." The new line consists of duplicating master books for levels K-8 in a wide range of subject areas, with particular emphasis given to fundamental skills. These books are written with the idea that both teachers and parents can use them in educating their children.

Enrich, which sells through distributors and special accounts but not direct to schools, is very pleased with the sale of its educational products, according to Goldenberg, who said the past year saw a growth rate of 20%. The company employs 20 full-time people and also works with an additional 20 professionals on specific projects. After expanding its facilities late last year, Enrich is currently deciding what direction the company should take in the near future.

news in brief . . .

Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development (1855 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94103) is looking for a publisher for "Television: A Course of Study." Title is subject to change after negotiation with successful bidder; limited-term copyright will be obtained. Inquiries should be directed to Fred Rosenau at Far West's Washington office, 1775 Church St. NW, Wasington, DC 20036 (202-332-1494).

Revenues of county governments increased 76% and expenditures went up almost as much. 74% -- between 1972 and 1977, according to a report from the 1977 Census of Government issued by the Bureau of the Census. The report, "Finances of County Governments, 1977 Census of Governments" (Vol. 4, No. 3, available for \$5.25 from Supt. of Documents, U.S. Gov't. Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402), says general expenditure for education rose 66.2% between 1971-72 and 1976-77, from \$4.0 billion to \$6.6 billion.

Hope Reports has a new address and phone number: 1600 Lyell Ave., Rochester, NY 14606 (716-458-4250).

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Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development  
1855 Folsom Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Information: Donna Lloyd-Kolkin  
(415)565-3320

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Division of Educational Technology, U.S. Office of Education, has awarded a contract to the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, San Francisco, for "Development of a Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum at the Secondary Level." The Laboratory will work closely with Boston's public television station, WGBH, and with the Educational Testing Service, Berkeley, in this new curriculum development endeavor.

The new curriculum will consist of seven (7) student learning units that can be used separately or combined into a complete high school language arts or social studies course. A family guide and teacher guide will accompany the printed learning materials. The curriculum will be designed to include both home and classroom activities, since critical TV viewing skills can be considered an extension of the critical thinking skills needed in everyday life.

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, director of the curriculum project for the Laboratory, will work interactively with students, parents, teachers, broadcasters, and expert consultants. A fully tested, revised, and refined set of curriculum materials will be completed by the fall of 1979.

\*\*\*\*\*

Melbourne, Australia

In the small pond the fish spent their time watching television. They watched it whatever it had to offer, making no judgment on whether a program was good, bad or mediocre.

But the fish did not really know what went on in the world.

It was not until a venturesome frog visited his bleary-eyed friends in the pond that they realised they had been missing out.

"The real world," he insisted, "isn't quite what it seems on TV."

This modern fairy tale is part of a new teaching tool, to be used throughout America, which is aimed at teaching children to use television instead of being used by it.

Six-year-olds in schools across the country will begin hearing it

next month when the course gets under way.

Called "critical television viewing skills," it has been devised by television and education experts and the course has been underwritten by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

"We're not passing judgment on children's programs," says Debbi Bilowit, the project director at the public-sponsored television station which handles the middle school part of the new curriculum.

"We're letting children do that for themselves."

Special programs for children:

# Learning about TV

From DIANA CALLANDER in New York

Miss Bilowit is developing 10 lessons to encourage children to make their own decisions about what they watch, when to watch and when to turn the television off.

The course has a family component where parents and children will be urged to watch some programs together —

critically and analytically.

A teacher's manual will instruct on how to merge the new lessons with existing instruction in reading, writing and social studies.

Other manuals will be available to students, parents and teacher training experts.

"Our philosophy is

that TV is neither good nor bad," says Dr Charles Corder Boiz, the director of the elementary school segment commissioning fairy tales and other stories at the Austin South West Development Laboratory.

"We believe that it can be a window on the world and we must help children, parents and teachers to use it properly.

"Critical viewing and thinking should start early.

"We'll be teaching children the limitations of TV but also showing them how to get the most out of it by watching intelligently.

"This includes dealing with persuasion—mainly advertisements, but not exclusively — and how to analyze messages.

"It also incorporates how casting affects the sales pitch, such as in the use of beautiful women to sell some products and of barely literate, not so beautiful people for others, and, of course, how stars lend their glamor to all sorts of appeals.

"In all units students will be encouraged to research, check and verify what they see and then draw their own conclusions."

The high school segment — chartered by Dr Donna Lloyd-Kolkin of the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development in San Francisco — will concentrate on television viewing skills.

It will involve questioning the quality of programs, recognising overt and covert messages both in news and entertainment and assessing the effects of television.

The new course aims at making young people recognise television as only one of the many ways to see the world.

Its ultimate goal is to change transfixed viewers into critical participants who look beyond the screen to the storyline, the characterisations, the ideas and lack of ideas and the obvious or hidden persuaders.

The experts of the new course are anxious to avoid the antagonistic stance so many critics and reformers have assumed — with monotonous regularity and shameless pretentiousness — in their efforts to protect children.

Instead they want to inform children about the economics of television and what it takes to produce shows.

The project will teach students to ask their own questions, use primary documents ranging from network annual reports to court transcripts, and it hopes to reinforce the basic skills, including listening.

Special teacher guides designed to offer an inside look at network decision-making are being

devised and programs will be scrutinised for evidence of misleading stereotypes, the impact of television's fictitious heroes and anti-heroes and the many ways in which sound or shoddy values are transmitted.

# Child's course in criticism

## Youngsters will learn how to watch TV analytically

(c) New York Times Service

New York, N.Y. — First graders throughout the country may soon be listening to a story about a number of fish who spend all their time watching television in their small pond without knowing what goes on in the greater world. In the end, a venturesome frog returns to the pond to tell his bleary eyed friends what they've been missing. The real world, he says, isn't quite what it seems on TV.

This modern fairy tale will be part of a national project called "Critical Television Viewing Skills" that has been underwritten by the Department of Health, Education

and Welfare and is being shaped into a new teaching tool by education and television experts in New York, Boston, San Francisco and Austin, Tex.

"The aim is to use TV instead of being used by it," says Debbi Bilowit, the project director at WNET in Newark, N.J., which handles the middle school (grades 6 to 8) part of the new curriculum. Her plan is to develop 10 lessons to encourage children to form their own judgments about what they watch, when to watch, and when to turn it off.

### Not passing judgment

"We're not passing judgment on their programs," Miss Bilowit says. "We're letting children do that for themselves."

The project includes a "family component," in which parents and children will be urged to view some programs together — critically and analytically. A teachers' manual will show how to merge the new lesson with existing instruction in reading, writing and social studies. Other manuals will be available to students, parents and teacher training experts.

It is in Austin's Southwest

Educational Development Laboratory that Charles Cordeiro Bolz, director of the elementary school segment commissions fairy tales and other stories.

"Our philosophy," he says, "is that TV is neither good nor bad, but that it can be a window on the world. We must help children, parents and teachers to use it properly."

Critical viewing and thinking, he continues, should start early. In one of the stories on the drawing board, a little girl saves her friend, the lizard, from drowning. She tells her story in school and a TV camera crew records the heroic deed. Later, when she sees herself on the evening news, she finds that the camera didn't get all the details quite right. Her mother then tells her why she has to make allowances for some of the difficulties in reporting a story secondhand, and also why she should not take everything as gospel truth just because it's on TV.

### Teaching limitations

"We'll be teaching children the limitations of TV, but also how to get the most out of watching intelligently," Bolz says.

That includes dealing with "persuasion" — mainly, but not exclusively, commercials — and how to analyze persuasive messages; how casting affects the sales pitch, as in the use of beautiful women to sell some products and of barely literate, not-so-beautiful people for others; and how stars lend their glamor and popularity to all sorts of appeals. In all units, students will be encouraged to research, check and verify what they see, and then draw their own conclusions.

### Aided by students

Dealing with the high school segment, Donna Lloyd-Kolkin at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development in San Francisco, began charting the project two months ago, aided by nine students with whom she and her colleagues watched their favorite programs. This test of the students' reactions was followed by a meeting of the curriculum review board composed of three teachers, three parents and four outside consultants.

The high school program will concentrate on skills in managing one's own TV viewing time, questioning the quality of programs, recognizing overt and covert messages both in news and entertainment, and assessing the effects of television on one's life.

### Transform viewers

The new program aims at making young people recognize television as only one of the many ways in which to see the world — more like the frog who ventured out of the pond than the fish glued to their submerged set. The ultimate goal is to transform transfixed viewers into critical participants who look beyond the screen to the story line, the characterizations, the ideas and lack of ideas, the overt or hidden persuaders.

Test runs will begin in February in a few high school classrooms in Boston, Chicago and the San Francisco Bay area. WNET will soon start training sessions for teachers and parents in New Jersey, Iowa, Texas and West

Milwaukee  
Journal  
2/79



## CURRICULUM TO TEACH CRITICAL TV VIEWING TO BE DEVELOPED FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

"Development of a Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum at the Secondary Level" is the title of a new curriculum to be developed under contract with the Division of Educational Technology, U.S. Office of Education, by the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, in conjunction with WGBH, Boston public television station, and the Educational Testing Service, Berkeley, California. The Laboratory said of the project:

"The new curriculum will consist of seven student learning units that can be used separately or combined into a complete high school language arts or social studies course. A family guide and teacher guide will accompany the printed learning materials. The curriculum will be designed to include both home and classroom activities, since critical TV viewing skills can be considered an extension of the critical thinking skills needed in everyday life."

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, director of the curriculum project for the Laboratory, will work with students, parents, teachers, broadcasters, and expert consultants. A full tested, revised, and refined set of curriculum materials is expected to be completed by fall 1979.

For other information, contact Ms. Lloyd-Kolkin at the Far West Laboratory, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

## CCR UPDATE SEES LITTLE PROGRESS

[Continued from preceding page.]

basic dilemma confronting the FCC — how may it best serve the public interest while protecting the First Amendment rights of the television licensees it is authorized to regulate? (The report) summarizes the FCC's efforts to protect children from the potentially harmful effects of television while also adhering to its interpretation of the First Amendment. . . .

"This Commission, in recommending an inquiry and rulemaking proceeding on the portrayal of minorities and women, advocates no infringement on the First Amendment rights of broadcasters. Rather, this Commission seeks an FCC inquiry into the causes of and possible remedies for the continued under-representation and stereotyping of minorities and women in television drama. It urges further exploration into the effects on both majority and minority viewers of under-representation and stereotyping. This Commission also urges the FCC to search for ways — either by making rules or by exercising leadership through the issuance of recommendations addressed to the industry — to increase the numbers of minorities and women who appear in television drama and to increase the diversity with which they are portrayed."

"Citing the disparity in employment status of minorities and women at network headquarters compared to their owned stations, the report also urged the FCC to seek Congressional authorization to regulate equal employment opportunity at the networks, as it now does at the broadcast stations."

"It also urges the FCC to exercise leadership by informing the television industry that it expects women and minorities to be portrayed with greater accuracy, diversity, and fairness."

"The Commission called on production companies and network programming officials to evaluate their own performance and find ways to use more women and minorities in roles as diverse as played by white males."

"It asked the networks to do a better job of employing minorities and women in the decision-making positions of their news units."

**HER-RAH**, a Sunday morning show on WRC-TV, NBC station in Washington, DC, will cover these subjects in February: "Women on the Bench," "Women & Health," "Lesbianism," and "Female Offenders." The four Sundays of March will be devoted to a four part mini-series on "Women in the Arts."

Producer of **HER-RAH**, Carolyn Chamberlin, may be reached at WRC-TV, 4001 Nebraska Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20016. Jill McDonald is Associate Producer, Lyn Jackson, Production Ass't.

## WOMEN WRITERS MEET VIA CPB SATELLITE

[Continued from page 1.]

The following are excerpts from a few of the scheduled panels on the second day:

"**'Attitudes, Values, Images'** (Panelists: Virginia Carter, Lila Garrett) [T]he area of values and attitudes implicit in television and film, with a particular focus on the images of women and minorities. . . . how attitudes and values of characters emerge during the development of material, and how they are communicated in its execution. . . . [S]igns of change occurring in the visibility of minorities and women."

"**'The Executive's World'** (Panelists: Henrietta Barlow, Marcia Carsey, Karen Cooper, Esther Shapiro; Moderator: Tamara Robinson) This panel will join network executives in television, radio and film, from both public and commercial broadcasting, to discuss executive functions, corporate power and decision-making as they pertain to writing and the writer. Discussion will include how decisions are made; how women fare at the executive level; panelists' own goals and concerns for women writers."

"**'Children's Television'** (Panelists: Faith Heckman, Norton Wright) This panel will overview existing programming in public and commercial television and will survey the need for writers in this area. . . .

"**'News, Public Affairs and the Documentary'** (Panelists: Gail Christian, Melinda Cotton, Roxanne Russell, Anna Sklar; Moderator: Susan Friedman) The panel will outline the special requirements involved in writing for news and public affairs within both public and commercial broadcasting. Also to be discussed are the career opportunities for less experienced writers. Panel will include guild and union affiliations for news writers; avenues of entry into the field; women's potentials for advancing to director or producer."

"**'The Producer's World'** (Panelists: Jacqueline Babbitt, Joanna Lee, Marcia Nasatir, Barbara Schultz; Moderator: Tamara Robinson) This panel will examine the functions and responsibilities of producers in relationship to writers, exploring the close, collaborative working relationship. . . . Discussion will include how writers can become producers."

"**'The Writer's World'** (Panelists: Caryl Ledner, Polly Platt; Moderator: Estelle Chagas) This panel of broadcast writers will focus on the writer's point of view, dealing with their values and perspectives as reflected in the films they create. The panel will explore some of the differences and similarities in writing feature films and films for television, both in terms of subject matter and script format."

Project consultants for the Conference included Susan Darcey, formerly Director of Public Information, Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC; Deena Goldstone, Writer, Los Angeles; Kay Loveland, Attorney, Los Angeles; Rita Poundstone, Network Coordinator for the Public Service Satellite Consortium Technical Group, Denver; and Sue Villegas, Co-founder, SENSOR, Women's Media Resource Center, Los Angeles.

For additional information about the Conference, contact Karen S. Frank, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 1111 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036 (202) 293-6160 or Pat Finn, KCET-TV, 4400 Sunset Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90027 (213) 666-6500.

## BROADCAST POSITIONS OPEN

Periodically, public stations, WNED-TV, WEBR (Public Radio's only all news station) and WNED-FM (A full-time concert music station) have employment openings.

Applications from minorities and women are especially encouraged.

For a listing of currently available positions, write: Tony Buttino, WNED-TV, P.O. Box 1263, Buffalo, New York 14240.

(Ad.)



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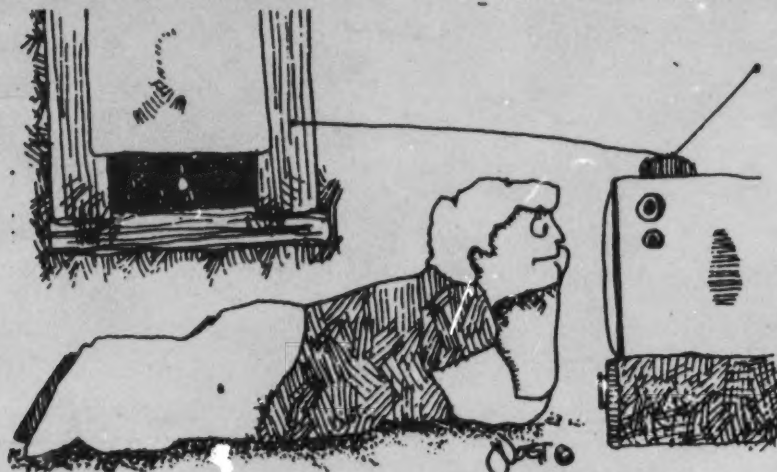
March '79 Self p. 17

## TEACHING KIDS TO BE TV CRITICS

Children are going to watch TV, that's for sure, but now the Department of Health, Education and Welfare is underwriting a project called "Critical Television Viewing Skills," aimed at developing a series of courses to teach kids how to use TV instead of being used by it. The courses, developed by education and television experts, are targeted for different age levels, from elementary through high school, and are designed to aid stu-

dents in recognizing their abilities to view new programs intelligently and critically.

The project includes family participation through which parents and children will be encouraged to watch programs together and discuss what they have seen. A teachers' manual is also being developed, which will help teachers incorporate the new lessons into existing courses in reading, writing and social studies.



# PHOENIX

Volume 23 Number 2

Thursday, February 1, 1979

San Francisco State University

## Deprogramming TV children

by Roger Cruzon

Each night between the hours of eight and 11 more than half the American population engages in a pastime that requires no physical or mental effort, save the adjustment of a few knobs or an occasional trip to the kitchen.

Without leaving the comfort of their "lazy boy" recliners, they witness countless murders, rapes, robberies and natural disasters they probably never will experience.

Yet as television approaches its third decade, more Americans are growing alarmed about its possible effects on viewers, especially on children. They fear that violence on the screen may lead to violence in the streets as children grow

older.

Television consumer groups are calling for massive change within the industry, but others, like Professor Donna Lloyd-Kolkin in San Francisco, approach the subject of television reform in a different way, using education rather than protest.

This spring, Lloyd-Kolkin and her colleagues at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development will test a new curriculum in which high school students learn the skills needed to analyze and criticize program content and evaluate their own viewing habits.

The program will be tested at nine high schools across the country, including

● see TV, page 8

## •tv

three chosen from the Bay Area. Once tested, the curriculum will be evaluated and revised as needed, in hopes it will become a standard part of high school education.

Although the curriculum is still being developed, Lloyd-Kolkin said the program will focus on the student's management of television viewing time (as measured on a take-home viewing log). Students will also analyze the content and quality of programs, recognize covert and overt messages in news and entertainment programs, and generally assess the effects of television on lifestyle.

They will also study dramatic form in television programming — plot, theme and characterization — and use of stereotypes.

"Students also will be told how television has developed as a commercial enterprise, how it is regulated, and how as future parents they can make an impact on the viewing habits of their children," Lloyd-Kolkin said.

The program is funded by a two-year grant from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). Similar programs for younger students are being developed at three other research laboratories.

Although much research has examined the effects of television violence on children, Lloyd-Kolkin said experts are unsure at what age children can understand television as something more than just a picture in a box.

"However, the overwhelming evidence suggests that children are indeed influenced by violent programming, as the Surgeon General's report on prime-time violence indicated," she said. "The effect of television is so dependant on the age of the child. Young children have a fairly short at-

tention span so that, even though they appear to be glued to the set, they actually are paying very little attention to what is going on in a program. But by late elementary age, they are able to make intelligent decisions about what they watch."

At 32, Lloyd-Kolkin is a member of the first "television generation." As such, she says she tends to be a little cynical about claims that television may be harmful to everyone.

"I get kind of tired of 'do-goodism,'" she said, referring to consumer action groups which try to force drastic changes in television content. "There are ways of changing things without adding cost to the networks. And you've got to remember that the number of children that will be adversely effected by television programming is relatively small."

Consumer groups say networks have been insensitive to protests against program content. But in response to the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) hearings on advertising content during children's programs held in San Francisco, ABC last week announced it will reduce the total advertising time during such programs by more than 20 percent over the next two years.

The two other major networks, NBC and CBS, so far have announced no plans to follow suit.

According to Lloyd-Kolkin, ABC has been the only major network to grant funds to research the effects of advertising on children. Recently, the network hired a children's programming censor, Susan Futterman, manager of children's programming for ABC.

Lloyd-Kolkin said because of Futterman's strict attention to violence and stereotypes in children's programming, ABC did not renew its contract to show cartoons like "Tom and Jerry," "Bugs Bunny" and the "Roadrunner," despite their popularity with older audiences.

She added that ABC is also trying to reduce the number of stereotyped characters in their Saturday morning programs.

Although children's programming, like all others, faces federal standards, there is little that can be done to change program content.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), a seven-member group formed to insure that stations broadcast in the public interest, has found

itself almost defenseless in attempts to influence program content because such action could violate freedoms of speech. In the past, the FCC's only recourse has been to withhold renewal of a station's license. Yet never in its 45-year history has the agency refused to renew a broadcast license on grounds that the station failed to serve the public interest. In 99 percent of all cases, license renewal is automatic — a practice that makes television opponents question the FCC's role as a watchdog.

There are now attempts to reform through congressional action what some feel is an antiquated standard — the Federal Communications Act of 1934. A new code — HR 13015, the Communications Act of 1978 — will be considered during this session of Congress.

Though the action in Congress indicates change in the communications industry, most of the change in the last five years has come from work done by consumer-oriented groups.

Action for Children's Programming, the group responsible for bringing the FTC hearings to San Francisco, was founded in 1968 by Peggy Charren, a mother of two. After viewing what she called "wall-to-wall monster cartoons" with her children one Saturday morning, she met with 30 other parents to discuss the problem. Now, a decade later, the group has more than 11,000 members.

In 1975, 6.3 million members of the national Parent-Teachers Association (PTA) voted to pass a resolution urging networks to reduce television violence.



2/21/77

## SEDL, Far West Projects on Critical TV Viewing Reported

Projects on critical television viewing at SEDL and Far West Laboratory were the subject of an article in a recent issue of The New York Times education section.

The SEDL program, directed by Charles Corder-Bolz, uses fairy tales and stories to teach elementary school children to examine the limitations of television and to deal with its efforts at persuasion.

Donna Lloyd-Kilkin heads the Far West project directed at high school students. The program features discussion of television's economics and operations, as well as exercises in questioning program quality and recognizing TV's overt and covert messages.

USOE's Division of Educational Technology funds the program.

## Positions Available

Position: Educational R&D Specialist in Educational Services Division; Research, Development and Evaluation Component.

Salary: \$21,520 and up, depending on qualifications, plus 18.5% fringe benefit package.

Duties: Planning (including research/development/evaluation design) and implementing (including substantive work and project management) on short-term problem-solving projects for immediate application to educational practice. Specific tasks include writing proposals and reports; designing applied research, and evaluation projects; completing data collection analyses; providing technical assistance and training to state/local educator-clients.

Qualifications: Ph.D. or equivalent in experience, preferably in area relevant to applied r&d or evaluation. Demonstrated ability in: writing proposals, reports; providing training and/or technical assistance to r&d personnel and educational practitioners. Knowledge of research/evaluation design and statistical methodology.

Dates: Resume and writing sample due March 15. Employment May 1, 1979-April 30, 1980, and beyond, depending upon continued funding.

Apply To: Mary Farley, Personnel Manager,

Appalachia Educational Laboratory, P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Position: Research Specialist

Salary: \$20,520 minimum

Duties: Involvement in development and application of labor market and employment information for comprehensive vocational education planning. Assist in selection and design of methodologies appropriate for current developmental activities. Co-author publications and reports. Interact with persons in other local, state, and federal agencies.

Qualifications: Ph.D. in economics; conceptualizing, quantitative, and writing skills.

Dates: Applications due March 1.

Apply to: Jill Holland, Personnel Services, National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1960 Kenny Rd., Columbus, OH 43210. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

## Proceedings of Conference on Productivity in R&D Available from CEDaR

Extra copies of the proceedings of CEDaR's 1977 National Conference on Productivity and Effectiveness in Educational Research and Development are available free from the CEDaR Office.

The publication contains remarks by representatives of CEDaR-member institutions: Hank Becker, Center for Social Organization of Schools; John Packard, Center for Educational Policy and Management; Leslie Salmon-Cox, Learning Research and Development Center; Virginia Thompson, Northwest Laboratory; and David Williams, SEDL.

Also included are presentations by: Margaret Chandler, Columbia University Graduate School of Business; Alexander Field, Stanford University; Carl Lyon, Battelle Memorial Institute; and Robert Ranftl, Hughes Aircraft. A discussion on "The Funders' Perspective on Productivity and Effectiveness" features comments by: George Shollenberger, National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice; Michael Timpane, National Institute of Education; and Wallace Wulfeck, Navy Personnel Research and Development Center.



## OE Project: Critical TV Viewing Skills

Rosemary Lee Potter

Last fall the United States Office of Education (USOE), through the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, announced the award of four coordinated contracts for the first year of a two-year project to develop critical television viewing skills in students. The award of more than \$800,000 is being shared by four groups who had submitted competitive proposals at four levels—elementary, middle school, secondary and post-secondary.

Right now each group is busily writing, reviewing and testing mostly print materials for students, teachers and parents. Experts in TV use with children and educators are acting as consultants. Children, teachers and parents are the reviewers—a nice twist! All of those involved have as a goal the conscious use of television, each planning instruction that can be integrated into the current curriculum.

Since the four project levels are to be coordinated, perhaps by next fall, we might possibly see the first nationwide child-adult effort toward selective TV use. One thing is certain, you can expect to see many new TV-related educational products for home and school next year, as a result of the government's stimulus. Look for them!

### Contracts Awarded

Here is the basic information released by each group awarded a contract in the critical TV viewing skill project:

*Elementary:* Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL), 211 East 7th St., Austin TX 78701

The purpose of this project is to develop and distribute widely curriculum materials for teaching critical television viewing skills to elementary school children from kindergarten through fifth grade.

Critical television viewing skills, as defined by USOE, include ability to: distinguish program elements; make judicious use of viewing time; understand the psychological implications of watching TV; distinguish fact from fiction; recognize and appreciate differing views; understand content of dramatic presentations, public affairs, news and other television programming; understand style of dramatic presentations, public affairs, news and other program formats and understand the relationship between television programming and the printed word.

Dr. Charles R. Corder-Bolz, project director and director of Learning and Media Research for SEDL, says: "In this project of national scope, the SEDL effort will involve development of curriculum materials for teacher, parent and student use. The goal of the project is to maximize the potentially positive learning opportunities for the medium and to reduce undesirable consequences of TV viewing." He continues, "Materials will capitalize upon students' interest in and experiences with television and teachers' desires to teach

certain academic and social concepts. Further, we envision these materials integrating the medium of television with basic subject areas in creative ways. For example, Fed-up Frog, a 'critic-viewer,' and Susie, a contemporary child, will explain TV literacy through stories. Television will be treated as still another learning resource to teach reading, language arts, social studies and math."

Parents too will become teachers of critical viewing skills at home, using stories, logs and a game board for actual play during viewing. After pilot-testing and field-testing of materials are completed, SEDL plans a series of nationwide workshops to introduce materials to parents as well as teachers. Distribution will be through major teacher, parent and youth groups including NEA and the Girl Scouts.

**Middle School:** Educational Broadcasting Corp. WNET, Channel 13, 356 West 58th St., New York, NY 10019

During 1978-79, WNET's Education Department will be developing an in-school curriculum to teach middle school students (grades 6-8) how to view television critically. This 10-lesson classroom curriculum, which is designed to be used nationally, will be nonjudgmental, providing students with specific standards for making their own decisions about the television programs they watch. The curriculum will relate directly to language arts skills and indirectly to social studies concepts now being taught in the middle school. It will stress helping the student relate television viewing to the printed word. A family component will help parents reinforce the skills their children learn during the school day.

Rather than being specifically geared to any one particular program, each lesson will be general enough to apply to all television viewing. Tentative titles of lessons include: "How Does It Fit In My Life?"; "Does It Make Sense to Me?"; "How Much Can I See and Hear?"; "What Is Its Format?"; "How Am I Being Persuaded?"; "How Can I Verify It?"; "How Did It Get There?"; "How Successful Are the Individual Pieces?"; "Do the Pieces Fit Together?" and "Should I Watch It?"

Materials will include a 64-page teacher's manual with lesson plans, vocabulary lists and suggestions for expanding lessons using in-school media; 10 eight-page students guides, or "criti-kits," with photographs, games, charts and logs, parent guides; training manuals for both teachers and parents. Five national training workshops will be held to introduce the materials and strategies. Debbie Bilowit is project director.

*continued*

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## TV Talk

**Secondary:** Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94103

The laboratory awarded the contract for secondary materials will work closely with Boston's public station, WGBH, and with the Educational Testing Service, Berkeley, Calif., in their endeavor. They will put together 10 student learning units that can be used separately or combined into a complete high school language arts or social studies course. The units are entitled "Viewing Behavior," "Business of Television Programming," "Production," "Advocacy Messages," "Dramatic Programs," "News/Information Programming," "Television and Politics," "Regulation/Access," "Future Technology" and "You and Television" (a critical recap of prior TV studies). A family guide and a teacher's guide will accompany the printed learning materials. The curriculum includes both home and school classroom activities, since "critical TV viewing skills" can be considered an extension of the critical thinking skills needed in everyday life.

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, director of the project for the laboratory, will work with students, parents, teachers, broadcasters and expert consultants. A fully tested, revised and refined set of curriculum materials will be completed by the fall of 1979.

**Post-secondary:** Boston University

The intent and program for development of the Boston University project are the same as those for the other three projects, while the adult level is of course a major consideration and difference. The main idea is that Boston University is part of a preschool through adulthood articulation of the long-needed television use education, grown from the worries, protests, activism and positive research of the early seventies. Apparently, USOE has a TV literacy goal for us all, a worthy objective. You can be sure that all 27 organizations who did not receive awards will be working on TV literacy materials. The USOE proposal was truly an educational spark!

### TeleNews and Views

• **Too Many Specials.** Networks are now competing in the area of specials for children. Since it is impossible for us to see seven specials a week and do anything in class with these shows in depth, I can only conclude that the networks still really do not care about children. Witness the still late hour (after two years of complaints) of many specials.

• **New News Programs.** Check your TV listings for the CBS lineup of news programs created especially for children. There's "In the News," the now famous brief digest of one news item repeated many times on weekend mornings. Also see "Thirty Minutes," patterned for young people after 60 minutes, and also "Razzmatazz," a program about youth.

• **Video-Proctor?** A new device announced in Scholastic's *News Citizen*. Brought home by my fifth graders, the magazine describes a mini-computer called the Video-Proctor, designed to control your home TV set by turning only to those shows parents choose. It can also limit viewing time. A wise question was asked by Scholastic: "Do you think you can do without a Video-Proctor?" My own children thought the item was not necessary "for any children who listen to their parents." I agree. Children need to make their own turn-off decisions!

• **Teletext—A Real TV-Print Link?** An expanded, perfected information system, Teletext, is now ready for use in thousands of homes in Great Britain. A printing device, it offers in print, for example, the recipes used on TV programs. You simply push a print-out button and you have it, on a five-by-six card. Next come puzzles, latest news in sports and the like. The FCC has encouraged the development of this device for the United States, and it is predicted that the gadgets will be inexpensive. However, journalists in the United States are not as eager to have the device. One, Kenneth Edwards, associate professor of journalism at the University of Alabama and an expert on Teletext, says that newspaper publishers will come to regard the system as "a very serious development." More conflict between print and TV?

• **The Continuing Debate—TV to Blame for Lack of Interest in Reading?** In the Nov. 19, 1978 *Family Weekly* Sunday magazine this subject was the "Pro and Con" item. "Boo!" to TV at present, but school, family and TV can form a "partnership." This statement was from Ernest L. Boyer, U.S. Commissioner of Education. On the other hand, Kenneth B. Hoyt, Director of Career Education for HEW, thinks blaming TV for lack of interest in reading is just a simplistic excuse. "We have," he said, "overplayed excuses for not reading and failed to adequately emphasize the benefits of reading." ●

*Rosemary Lee Potter is a reading teacher at Safety Harbor Middle School in the Pinellas County Schools (Clearwater, Fla.) and the author of New Season: The Positive Use of Commercial Television with Children (Merrill).*

# How to Fight Bad TV

Ralph Nader

**America's leading consumer crusader, and now chairman of the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, tells how you can talk back to your TV—and make it listen.**

Are you disturbed by some of the things you see on television? Are there programs, commercials, ways of reporting the news—or total trends of content—that you'd like to change? If the answer is yes, you're not alone. Because today TV is so pervasive, because the air waves are public property and because citizens are increasingly aware of the effect of media on the quality of life, concern is growing about what is and what is not being shown on the ubiquitous tube.

Perhaps the most vociferous criticism comes from groups such as the Parent Teacher Association, which actively deplores the violence, sex and foul language often used on television. Networks receive many complaints about the number of commercials, and both advertisers and TV stations are frequently challenged about deception and bad taste in advertising. Women and minorities are deeply concerned about the sexual and racial stereotyping that strengthens existing prejudices against them. And growing numbers of citizens are increasingly aware of the poor quality of programming and the inadequate variety of what is offered.

## **What can you do at home?**

You can do something about what comes into your home. But to become more effective as a public citizen, you must first become more educated as a private viewer. It is, therefore, important to become a critically aware TV-watcher. You can begin to do this by monitoring your television viewing time and habits. Keep a chart for a month, adding up the time you spend watching TV and noting the kinds of programs you choose. Do the same for your children. With this information, you can get a clearer idea of how TV affects the lives of each of your family members. Does it determine mealtimes and bedtimes? Does watching TV reduce the time you have for reading, writing letters, talking with friends and family or getting involved in community activities?

Disciplining children's TV habits is, increasingly, an important obligation for parents. Many parents (78 percent in one survey) use TV as a babysitter. By the age of 18, most children have spent between 15,000 and 20,000 hours in front of the tube. TV is, indeed, bringing up our children.

More and more parents tell me that they have put their small children on a weekly TV budget—there is a

certain amount of time allocated for TV-watching—and, together, the parents and child decide what programs the child will be allowed to watch. It's also helpful to watch TV with your youngsters. Find out how they feel about what they've watched—were they frightened, confused, pleased?

The importance of educating children about TV can't be underestimated. In fact, Horace Newcomb, a TV-education specialist at the University of Maryland, says that children should study TV in school so that they will *think* about what they watch rather than merely *react* to it.

Other people and groups are thinking and working along the same lines. In a federally funded project, education and television experts are putting together a curriculum called "Critical Television Viewing Skills," that is aimed at teaching children to analyze and criticize TV. The project is still in the testing stage, but you may want to bring it to the attention of your schools now. (For more information about the project, write to D.W. Bilowit, WNET Education Dept., 356 W. 58th St., New York, N.Y. 10019.)

## **What are your rights?**

Regulating the use of the airwaves is the responsibility of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). This government agency gives television station owners a three-year renewable license. In return, the stations are obliged to perform as public trustees; they must "serve the needs of the local community," to quote a former FCC commissioner.

Citizens have the right to challenge, in formal legal proceedings before the FCC, the license renewal applications of any television station. Many citizen groups have already done so, alleging, for example, that stations have provided prejudicial or inadequate coverage of activities, subject areas or racial groups in the community. These challenges rarely result in license revocation. Often, however, viewer complaints can be resolved with informal negotiations between station owners and local citizens.

There are other duties that station owners must fulfill. The "fairness doctrine" means that a broadcaster must treat—impartially—"controversial issues of public importance," and must present different sides of such issues within a reasonable time. Stations are also required to study the needs of the community. If they haven't followed this procedure, called "ascertainment," citizens have the right to challenge license renewals.

In the past decade, a growing number of citizens, forming their own media reform groups, have urged stations to invite viewers to express their opinions over the air. Groups have worked to (continued on page 181)



## Ralph Nader Reports

*continued from page 17*

get stations to hire more news reporters and have urged networks to reduce the violence in TV shows.

Church and parent committees all over the country are monitoring television in a systematic way, gathering evidence on specific issues. The committees often send this material to the FCC in Washington. When license renewal time comes around, the stations are expected to respond.

### Where to get more information

There are many groups that will gladly help you follow your own particular television interest. The National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting (the group with which I'm associated), 1028 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 will send you names of local citizen media groups in your region. We also can supply other useful materials, including information on a

new method of rating TV. Unlike the Nielsen ratings, this method would poll not only how many people watch a particular program, but how much they actually like it. (Please be sure to enclose a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope.)

Action for Children's Television, 46 Austin St., Newtonville, Mass. 02160 can direct you as a parent to wonderful materials about what to watch for and work for in children's TV. These materials include advice on how to talk about, look at and choose programs with your child.

The PTA TV Action Center, 700 N. Rush St., Chicago, Ill. 60611 will send you information about their campaign for less violence in television programs.

You might want to ask for the *TV Program Review Guide* (\$.50 for one copy or \$1.00 for three), a twice-yearly publication that evaluates specific prime-time network shows. The analyses in the guide are based on reports from thousands of PTA members all over the country.

The TV Action Center also maintains a national toll-free hotline to answer your questions about the TV industry. The number is 800-323-5177 (Illinois residents, call 800-942-4266).

The National Advertising Division of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, 845 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022 will act on your complaints about the truth and accuracy of claims made in national TV advertising.

**End**

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# Learning <sup>NY TIMES</sup> On the Tube <sup>3/1/79</sup> Has Finally Arrived

By FRED M. HECHINGER

Educational television has had two crosses to bear, its dedicated supporters and its dedicated foes. Frantic overselling of television as a pedagogical panacea merely stiffened the backs of those who view any outside source of instruction as a threat to education's workhorse, the teacher. But for several reasons, not the least of them the modern child's early conditioning, educational television today is closer than ever to defeating its opposition. Changes in technology almost assure its victory.

The enemies of Instructional Television (ITV) march in a mixed army of diverse interests and views. Among intellectuals hostility to the "boob tube" is an article of faith, and teachers are, or pretend to be, intellectuals. Some teachers also see ITV as a threat to their job security, and such fears were bolstered by the medium's early supporters, who portrayed the screen as a replacement for live instruction.

A mixed bag of psychologists and reformers seized on overindulgence in TV to explain all the youth troubles they could not cure. They like to say, as did nearly half of all educators in a recent survey, that "children watch enough TV at home; they don't need to watch more in school."

The most consistent, and surely the most justified, complaint about home viewing is its passivity, its addictive nature and its replacement of activities that tax and stimulate mind and hands. Almost inevitably, educational TV was tarred by the same brush; at the very least, it was viewed as an unfair competitor of reading, already an endangered art.

## Breaking the Ice

These complaints were given substance by early ITV's rigidity. Ready or not, the class would have to tune in when the program was on. One coup of the 1950's was the wiring of an entire county, in Hagerstown, Md., for closed-circuit instruction. Master teachers became instant stars. Educational pilgrims trekked to Hagerstown and went home ecstatic over the quality of the teaching that suddenly reached all children rather than a lucky few. Much of the ecstasy was justified, but it ignored the fatal flaw — the straitjacket effect of even the best centrally transmitted instruction. But new technological developments make television as flexible as the textbook. Today, the key to TV in the classroom is the video cassette and the school-recorded tape of programs aired at an inconvenient time.

Any assessment of television as an educational tool has to begin with the fact that traditional teaching has failed in crucial areas. Alert parents know that television, whether aimed at children or not, can teach. Among programs designed for children, "Sesame Street" broke the ice. Today ITV has outpaced its pioneer.

For example, the International Instructional Television Cooperative (ITV-CO-OP), a nonprofit organization founded in 1973, develops, produces and distributes educational materials in the language arts, science, social studies, art and consumer education. "Write On!" is a series of five-minute programs that combine entertainment with grammar and writing. "Dragons, Wagons & Wax" is a 32-part series of 15-minute programs in science for the primary grades that includes such titles as "It's Alive" and "Number One Sun." "Cover to Cover" introduces grade-school children to books in 64 15-minute programs, each a "teaser" that tells just enough about a book to whet the appetite. The 1978 New York International Film and Television Festival awarded a silver medal to "The Tell-Tale Heart," the dramatization of Edgar



Pre-school children at the Early Learning Center in Stamford, Conn. watch

Allan Poe's tale as part of a series on the short story.

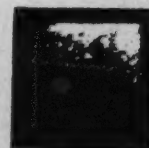
More controversial is the trend toward TV script-reading, or "scripting," in which the major networks provide schools with scripts of prime-time programs weeks ahead of airing. The aim is to motivate students to analyze, criticize and branch out into reading and research. Some skeptics wonder whether the networks may not be using the device to get even more children hooked on the tube. But reports from the field suggest that in the hands of alert teachers, "scripting" can just as readily be turned into a detector of all that is shabby in commercial TV.

Building on that, the Federal Government has sponsored development of a critical viewing curriculum, from kindergarten to college. The project includes a segment on how to determine quickly that a program deserves to be turned off.

The future of instructional television will be determined by the education community's response. A study sponsored by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in cooperation with the National Center for Educational Statistics suggests that the balance has tipped, ever so slightly, in favor of television. Just over half of all superintendents and teachers, and 60 percent of the principals, agreed that "ITV shows great possibility for stimulating teacher creativity." More than 30 percent of the administrators, and 49 percent of the teachers, thought "teachers don't make enough use of ITV." Only about 10 percent were openly negative, leaving slightly more than one-third in the "don't know yet" category.

Already 15 million students are reached by instructional television. Videotape equipment is available to almost two out of three teachers in the Northeast and North Central regions and to two out of five teachers in the South and West. So far, there are no credible data on the effectiveness of ITV.

Before long, most teachers will themselves be part of the TV generation. Like it or not, this insures a change in attitude. Two years ago, when a natural gas shortage shut down most schools in Columbus, Ohio, local teachers resorted to instruction via television. Overnight, some educational stars were born, and even run-of-the-mill performers developed a new respect for the camera as a taskmaster. It magnifies shoddiness and excellence alike, and that fact may have to be the fundamental concern about the future impact of television on education.



D. Lloyd -  
Kobin

3/17/79

# Studying With the TV On: Tuning In More Than the Basics

By LESLIE MAITLAND

The members of Helen Kolsky's high school English class can effortlessly lift 2,000 pounds, walk on ceilings and go flying through the air — or at least that is the image they are trying to project.

Television's special effects are no mystery to these students at Park West High School on West 50th Street in Manhattan. If they are not particularly impressed when Hollywood films Superman moving faster than a speeding bullet or leaping mighty buildings with a single bound, it is not because they are lase. Rather, it is because they, too, are learning tricks of the trade that has shaped their generation.

Instruction in television, as an art

and as a science, has been growing in city schools, as it has around the country.

In New York, more than 100,000 students have been involved in television studies in the past five years, and the program will be expanding, according to Dr. Morris Freedman, who heads the Board of Education's Center for Library, Media and Telecommunications.

Experimental curriculums for children from kindergarten through ninth grade have recently been tested and are planned to be incorporated in most city schools next fall, Dr. Freedman said, making television a regular area of study in public classrooms.

## A National Project

On the national level, the Parent-Teacher Association announced last year that it is financing a \$1 million project to devise curriculum materials to teach children about television. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare is providing money for a similar project in New York, Boston, San Francisco and Austin, Tex.

"The aim is to use TV instead of being used by it," explained Debbi Bilowit of WNET, which is working on

the new curriculum for grades six to eight as part of the Federal project. She said she hopes to be able to teach children to form their own judgments about what is worthwhile watching.

Miss Kolsky said that one reason for teaching students about television is to make them more sophisticated members of a society increasingly dependent on visual communication. By high school graduation, says a Board of Education guidebook for teachers, the average American child has spent 14,000 hours with eyes fixed on television screens — 4,000 hours more than he has spent in classrooms.

"They need skills to function in a media world, just as they need skills to function in a print world," Miss Kolsky

pointed out. "And they are much more able to evaluate what they see when they are capable to some extent of working in that world themselves."

And so, when Miss Kolsky's students break up into groups to work on an assignment, they rush to cameras set up around their classroom and plunge into the world of television taping. Minutes later, they gather around a monitor to criticize each other's efforts, much as in another day they might have analyzed a poem or composition.

"The problem in the schools is that most kids have trouble reading and writing," Miss Kolsky said in a recent interview. "But everything has been based on print, and we don't live in a print world any more. One of my prime goals in this class is to use video as a motivational tool for reading and for writing. We write scripts, and we read about television. And when I assign them to watch TV, they are aware of content as well as technical aspects. They know they are related in the same way the form of a book or poem is related to its content."

To the students, however, there appears to be a some difference between discussing the content of a book and that of a television program, especially

when it comes to earning credit for taking an English class while studying television — an option that began in Miss Kolsky's school this year.

"A regular English class gets boring, where you just sit around reading books," said Anthony Inman, one of Miss Kolsky's students, echoing the feelings of classmates.

#### One Educator Concerned

With tests for reading competency demonstrating once again this year that students in the city's schools fall below the national standards for their grades, there are educators like George N. Gordon, who think modernity has gone too far in education.

Dr. Gordon, who is a professor of communications at Muhlenberg and Cedar Crest Colleges in Allentown, Pa., wrote to *The New York Times* to object to television education for young children.

"I do not think in the light of educational pioneering of this sort," he wrote, "that we need to wonder too long or hard why students coming to college these days can neither read nor write nor do fractions."

Dr. Freedman does not agree. "There is concern that people are reading less because they watch TV more," he said. "But programs can stimulate the reading of books. If children watch a Shakespeare play on television, it brings the characters and the language of Shakespeare alive. And then, with that experience, youngsters are more likely to understand Shakespeare's written word. Television can provide the motivation."

#### 3,000 Teachers Trained

According to Dr. Freedman, more than 3,000 teachers have already been trained in the subject of television at the Board of Education. And, he said, the city has almost \$2 million worth of video equipment dispersed among 800 schools. The study of television may have a vocational focus in some of them, he said, but the board's first concern is to help children develop critical viewing habits.

Nevertheless, some educators point with pride to students who do wish to pursue careers in television. One of those teachers is Donald Pitkoff, now assistant principal of the Edward R. Murrow High School in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn. He is credited with originating the idea of video instruction in city schools, having begun 12 years ago with equipment borrowed from the Sony Corporation.

Since then, he has had students videotaping surgery in operating rooms at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, doing tapes for the police on safety, and shooting concerts.

#### Some Plan Careers

At the Murrow High School, Mr. Pitkoff said, last year's first graduating class of 600 students included 14 who specialized in television, of whom 13 went on to college. Eleven of the 13 said they planned to pursue a career in the medium and obtained \$45,000 in combined scholarships.

Dr. Freedman, who recently attended an annual convention of the National Association for Educational Communications and Technology in New Orleans, said that in some parts of the country, students are producing programs that appear on cable television in their communities.

And with the controversy raging about the propriety of advertisements aimed at children, shown during programs aired for them, Dr. Freedman said, the value of educating children in television viewing has gained widespread acceptance — even among parents who have traditionally bemoaned their children's addiction to the screen.



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# NEWS NOTES

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## Catholic Library Association

The annual convention of the CLA will be held April 16-19 in Philadelphia, under the theme "Sharing the Light of Faith—Library Services for Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." In addition to meetings and exhibits, there will be two continuing education institutes. Advance registration is available until April 1. For more information, write John T. Corrigan, C.F.X., Catholic Library Association, 461 West Lancaster Avenue, Haverford, PA 19041, or call 215-649-5251.

## Developing AV Health Materials

The University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) will present a symposium on developing audiovisual instructional materials April 18-20. The course is designed for faculty, preceptors, and others teaching in the health and allied health professions. Course enrollment will be limited to 30, and there will be a \$75 fee. For program information, write UCSF Continuing Health Sciences, 1343 Third Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94143, or call 415-666-3904.

## Quality Media for Children

Kent State University's 21st school media workshop, April 27-28, will celebrate the International Year of the Child with the theme, "Advocacy and Action for Quality Media Programs." Program details can be obtained from Clara O. Jackson, KSU School of Library Science, Kent, OH 44242.

## Technology's Impact on the Arts

The Audio Engineering Society's convention, to be held May 11-13 in Los Angeles, will feature a symposium on the revolution in home entertainment: new technology's impact on the arts. The fee for the convention is \$80. For more information, write Department of the Arts, UCLA Extension, PO Box 24902, Los Angeles, CA 90024, or call 213-825-9064.

## Developing TV Viewing Skills

The Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, working under a contract from the U.S. Office of Education, is in the process of developing a critical television viewing skills curriculum at the secondary level. The laboratory will work with Boston's public television station, WGBH, to develop seven student learning units that can be used separately or combined into a complete high school language arts or social studies course. For more information, write Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

## Grants for Special Ed. Teachers

George Peabody College for Teachers has announced the availability of awards for doctoral and master's level preparation in the education of visually and multiply handicapped persons. Financial assistance of up to \$5,900 for doctoral and \$3,900 for master's study may be granted. Interested scholars should apply to R.K. Harley, Box 328, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, TN 37203.

## A Teacher's Guide to "Nova"

"Nova," the prize-winning weekly science documentary series, has begun its sixth season. Teaching materials designed to enhance the educational use of the program are available from the show's producer. For copies, write Nova, WGBH Boston, 125 Western Avenue, Boston, MA 02134, or call 617-492-2777.

## Summer Study in Britain

Kent State University will participate in a seminar on "Educational Media in Britain," offering five quarter hours of graduate or undergraduate credit. The seminar will begin with the flight to England on June 20. The flight home will be July 12, with final work at KSU

to be completed by July 20. Cost of the seminar, including flights, housing, ground transportation, and two meals a day, is \$1,450. For more information, write Charles Hunger, Director Audio Visual Services, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242, or call 216-672-3456.

## "Media Review Digest 1978"

The new edition of this annual reference work is now available, with several improvements over previous editions. MRD is a guide to reviews of nonbook media, as cited in a large assortment of periodicals, and is priced at \$120. For more information, write Pierian Press, 5000 Washtenaw, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

## Micrographics Section in "Fortune"

The March 12, 1979, issue of "Fortune" magazine includes a special section on "Productivity and Information Management." The section was written by International Data Corporation, and was sponsored by the National Micrographics Association.

## North Dakota Summer Conference

"New Horizons in Educational Media" is the theme of a conference/workshop to be held July 16-20 at North Dakota State University. The conference offers two hours of undergraduate or graduate credit. For more information, write NDSU Continuing Studies, Ceres Hall, Fargo, ND 58102, or call 701-237-7014.

## Information Science at Pittsburgh

A new brochure describing facilities, services, and programs in research and teaching of information science has been produced by the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh. Copies of the brochure are available from Ann Lee Alexander, GSLIS, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260.

## Library Group Changes Names

The Council of National Library Associations has changed its name to the Council of National Library and Information Associations, Inc. The council, founded in 1942, promotes a closer relationship among national library and information associations of the United States and Canada through its 16 member associations.

In order to be included in "News Notes," information about meetings, conferences, workshops, and so on must be received by us at least 90 days before the date of the meeting or application deadline. Send information to Audiovisual Instruction, 1126 Sixteenth Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

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# All the world's a TV set and . . .

**We are the mortals  
who must write a  
curriculum for it**

by Ann Christine Heintz

What is more basic to our lives than television? And so, what better way for schools to get back to the basics than to have the U.S. Office of Education design a curriculum for television-viewing?

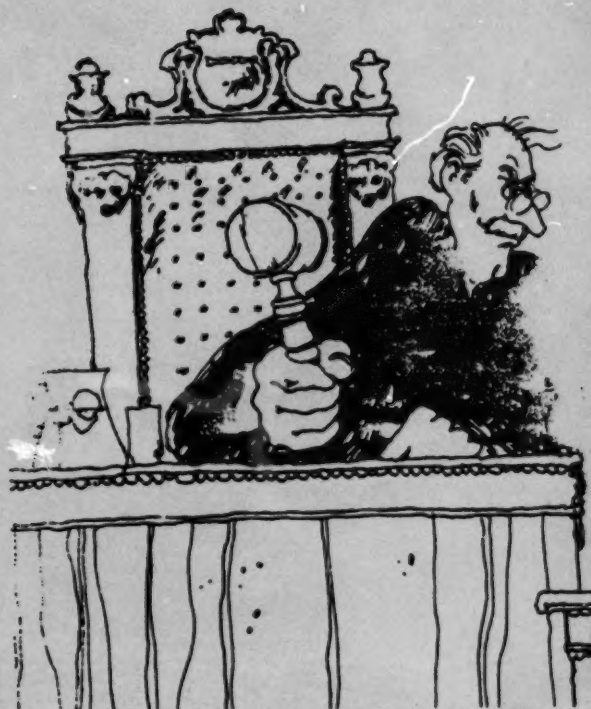
Right now four separate educational centers are doing just that -- boosted by a million dollars in contracts from USOE. The national project is called "Development of Critical Television Viewing Skills in Students."

The curriculum design for post-secondary schools is in the hands of Boston University. So controversial was the thought of teaching college students how to watch television that Senator William Proxmire named the project to his famous list of "Golden Fleece Awards."

The primary school TV curriculum design is being directed by the Southwest Educational Development Lab (Austin, Texas). The middle grades design will be prepared by WNET (Ch. 13), New York City, and the secondary curriculum will be the work of the Far West Laboratories for Educational Research and Development.

Because of the special interest of JEA in secondary education, we chose to focus this interview on the developments at Far West Labs under the direction of Donna Lloyd-Kolkin.

The following interview with Donna was conducted in February, shortly before the Lab's first draft of student-teacher materials was to be reviewed by USOE. The creation of a high school text in television-viewing for this project is under subcontract to WGBH-TV, Boston's public television station, with Douglas Smith as Project Director.



**Q.** Your proposal describes American children as persons who have been endlessly massaged by television. You see that a curriculum in television-viewing will be valuable because it will enable students to be massaged on their own terms. What does this mean to you?

**A.** People are going to watch TV. They are going to continue to watch TV outside the formal classroom. What I would like to be able to do (with this curriculum design) is to leave students with some way to evaluate what it is they're watching, some way to make some sense of what TV means in their lives. And by that I mean not only being able to look at television and say, "This is a good program," or "This is not a good program," or "I really should watch Shakespeare this week instead of Starsky and Hutch." But, rather, when they watch television they will have some sense of the artistic dimensions that television can have but doesn't always have; some sense of the economic role that television plays in their lives, and some cynicism about what it is that they see.

**Q.** Does this "sense" include understanding the effect of television as a common culture, probably the only one that youth around the country are sharing, and, thus, the only one that will be common to them as adults?

**A.** We are not talking about that particular topic in the curriculum. That is, we don't have three paragraphs in the text that say that when you are in Chicago and somebody else is in Portland, you do have this common culture. We are asking students to think about the effects of television in their own lifetime, and hopefully "common culture" will be one of the things that comes out.

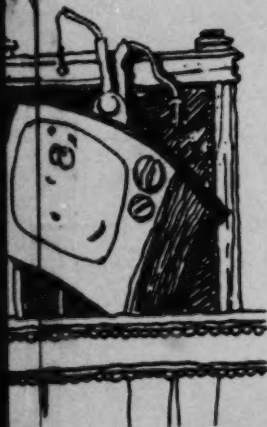
**Q.** The research that was cited in your proposal presents television as a negative factor in the lives of children; that is, a force that shapes them and limits their freedom. Are you satisfied with the conclusions of that research?

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**"The student board looked at  
our proposed goals and rated  
them from their perspective."**

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Nothing seems more basic to our lives these days than television. Maybe that's why everybody seems to be making judgments about its effects. Even the U. S. Office of Education has gotten into the act by awarding \$1 million in contracts to design curriculum for television viewing. TVision decided to talk to a representative of the organization developing the curriculum for secondary schools.

A. No, I think that those are the types of research projects that various people have been able to get funded, especially through the Surgeon General's office.

Q. What other research, then, is needed? What research would help you develop your curriculum?

A. One of the things I would like to know more about is the role of television in family communication, especially with relation to the adolescent. What little research that has been done in family communication has either been contradictory or really not very conclusive. It would be helpful in planning some sort of family skills guide to have that information.

It would also be helpful to have a clear sense of the role of television in people's lives. (It would probably have to be done as qualitative rather than quantitative research.)

Q. What do you see as the contents of your high school TV curriculum at this point?

A. The plan now calls for one student text book divided into seven chapters (See "Tentative Curriculum Outline," page 5.) Each chapter includes some exposition material, some readings, a set of activities, discussion-writing assignments, debate topics, and a set of spirit masters for teachers to use with assignments.

Q. Has your teen advisory board looked at the material yet?

A. Not the whole group, but individual teens have looked at them, and they have been enthusiastic. They love the exercises and want to sit down and do them right there.

Q. How were the teens on your consulting board chosen?

A. Nine high school students from seven high schools in the Bay Area were selected. I don't know whether to say they were chosen systematically or unsystematically. We did try to balance it. We have two Spanish-speaking, one Asian-American, two Blacks, urban-suburban locations ... We put one requirement on it, that these teens had to be reasonably comfortable with themselves in talking with groups because we had to bring them together very quickly.

What we did was bring the teens together for a one-day meeting last October. After they viewed two prime time programs, we split them into two groups to talk about their reactions to the shows. The purpose of that session was to

## A curriculum in television

The secondary school TV curriculum design, commissioned under a contract from the U. S. Office of Education, is being prepared by the Far West Laboratories for Educational Research and Development. Below is the tentative outline.

### Unit 1

#### An Introduction to You and Television

"This is an exploration of the relation between television and human behavior."

### Unit 2

#### The Television Industry: Structure, Business, Regulation, Programming

"An historical overview; how programmers deliver us up to advertisers; how public TV developed; the influence of ratings and the importance of scheduling."

### Unit 3

#### Television Dramatic Form and Production

"Students learn about plotting and sub-plotting, characterization and production techniques. A sub-section stands by itself which calls for the class to engage in a full scripting exercise."

### Unit 4

#### Commercials and Other Persuasions

"Includes the case study of a commercial from a producer's point of view; scripts of McGovern and Nixon commercials."

### Unit 5

#### News and Information Programming

### Unit 6

#### Learning from Television

"A look at the hidden curriculum -- the problem-solving, the social patterns, the stereotypes."

### Unit 7

#### Television Viewers of the Future

"A recap of the whole course. One concluding question asks, As parents, what rules will you set for your children?"

give our staff some sense of the way high school students approach TV, what they like and don't like, how sophisticated they are, what understanding they have of production techniques.

The student board looked at the proposed goals of the curriculum and rated the importance of each of the goals from their perspective.

For example, I thought one important outcome of the curriculum should be that the student understands that he can do something about programming. He can write a letter to the network.

The student board, generally, didn't think that goal was important. I wasn't willing to compromise that goal because of the things they said.

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**"I would like to know more about the role of television in family communication, especially in relation to the adolescent."**

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Once we have a final set of materials we'll bring the teen group back into the laboratory. I'm not sure what the structure will be. Maybe we'll try to teach the course with them over a three-day weekend so that they have the experience of more than just reading, but, rather, actually carrying out the activities. I'm not sure what their role will be.

Q. Ultimately, then, the teens are more of a responsory group. They're not an empowered group.

A. That's right. We have no empowered group other than the staff.

Q. Is there any attempt to arrive at discovery? You admitted that there are some voids in the research, and, so, I wondered to what extent the students themselves might hit upon some relevant goals that the staff might not guess exists.

A. That is not now in our plans.

Q. What is your present time line?

A. We are going to finish the teacher materials and the student materials by the end of March, I hope. Which means we won't be able to field test it this spring. We're trying to find some summer schools. In the meantime, the Student Advisory Board will review the material this spring.

I have been saying that the materials will be available next fall. We have been talking about getting a commercial publisher. If we are successful in doing that (OE is talking about holding a bidders' conference with publishers the beginning of April), then I am not sure when the materials will be available because it is then a matter of the publisher's schedule.

Q. If a book publisher requires a year, it could be the fall of 1981?

A. I don't understand how this whole process of getting a publisher works. I believe that OE can demand that they get the book out by a certain date.

Q. Why does a publisher want to print a book he can't copyright? (Materials created by public funds are in the public domain.)

A. I'm not sure that the publisher can't copyright.

Q. Supposing the materials do go to a commercial house, how will teacher training be handled?

A. The materials are being developed so that no teacher training is required. We are required under the government contract to offer workshops next year. At this point we are considering seminars and workshops in conjunction with educators' conventions.

Q. Is there any important aspect I've failed to cover?

A. Yes, we haven't talked about the family guide. We are thinking about it as a separate format entirely. Possibly something that could be sold at the super markets.

What can you reasonably expect teens and their parents to do together? The suggestion of our Curriculum Review Board is to call this a Teenager's Guide to TV rather than calling it a Parent Guide.

We're also thinking of this guide as being a series of interviews with different real families about what they do with TV, how they use it to stimulate communication.

Q. At three or four points in the proposal you refer to the "best of television." Would you talk about your criteria for determining the "best"?

A. I have a strong conviction (and I was voted down on this by the rest of the staff, although I think it comes out in the curriculum anyway) that TV is an art form unto itself. It is a medium that shares certain characteristics with other dramatic forms, but it does have some vocabulary and a set of rules and constraints that are unique.

By "best of TV" I mean those programs that best exploit the limits of this unique medium.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ann Christine Heintz, co-chair of the TV Commission, has written ten books about the media and its persuasive effects. Currently, she works with teenagers who produce a monthly newspaper for

teens throughout the Chicago area called New Expression. In 1976 she co-authored the award-winning *Me and My TV*, a book about using popular television to teach, in the home and classroom.

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, director of the secondary curriculum in television viewing project at Far West Labs in San Francisco, meets with Ned White and Douglas Smith of WGBH-TV, Boston.



This magazine format edition of TVision, the monthly publication of the TV Commission of the Journalism Education Association, is the second of two special supplements this school year.

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# NOW IT'S THE THREE R'S —PLUS ARCHIE AND EDITH

A controversial Government program aims at sharpening children's viewing skills

By Sally Bedell

Twenty sixth-graders at the N.K. Brampton Middle School in South Bound Brook, N.J., tramped into their sixth-period language-arts class one blustery afternoon last February and received an unexpected surprise. "How many of you would like to watch *All in the Family* now?" asked their teacher for the day, Lynne Brenner Ganek of WNET-TV in nearby New York City. Not surprisingly, the children whooped with joy.

First, however, Ganek prodded the students to flex their brains a bit. She reviewed a list of more than a dozen questions to keep in mind while watching a 10-minute slice of the show. Does the setting reveal something about the characters? she wondered. What time of day or year is it? Is the time involved true to life? How do the characters look? How do they act? Are there conflicts between them?

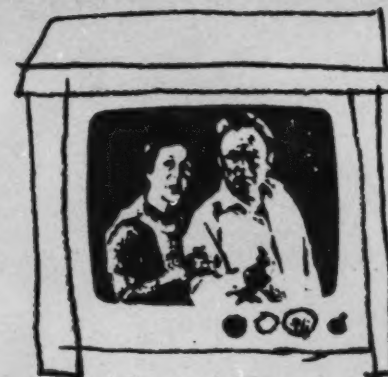
The TV set clicked on, and the children giggled appreciatively as Edith parried the pompous queries of a banker intent on rejecting her loan

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application because she was "only a housewife." To all appearances, the magnetic allure of TV had extinguished whatever critical sparks Ganek had struck earlier.

But a funny thing happened during the ensuing half-hour discussion of the 10-minute bit of *All in the Family*. The children's responses revealed considerable insight. The Bunkers' home and furnishings told them that the couple from Queens was "not rich." They correctly read Edith's mood as "upset," "furious" and "disappointed because she thought they weren't treating women equal to men." And—most telling of all—they knew that the show's action took place in the afternoon. Their clever reasoning: Edith had told the banker that she had watched a soap opera earlier on television. "Everyone knows that soap operas don't begin until noon!" announced one boy.

For their homework assignment, Ganek asked the students to concoct an ending for the episode and to "play director" by casting friends and relatives in the various *All in the Family* roles. As the class ended, one student looked at Ganek and said, "That was cool."



Ganek and her colleague from WNET, Debbi Bilowit, felt the same way, although they expressed it differently. The day's lesson, titled "Recipe for a TV Story," was the first test for an experiment by WNET, one of New York City's public-television stations, to teach children in grades 6 through 8 how to watch TV more analytically. Said Bilowit, "We saw that our questions could clarify their thoughts about what they see on TV, and that we could apply some basic language-arts skills to television viewing."

The WNET program and three similar efforts around the country are being supported by \$823,651 from the U.S. Office of Education. Each of the four projects seeks to develop a "critical television viewing skills" curriculum for a different age group—from kindergarten through college. After the courses have been tested in classrooms throughout the country, the U.S. Government will throw in another \$800,000 to train teachers and distribute the texts and workbooks.

Other groups are actively promoting what is called "visual literacy" as well. Since January 1977, the Media Action Research Center,

funded by educational and church-related foundations, has instructed more than 900 people in "television-awareness training." Two Yale University psychology professors, Jerome and Dorothy Singer, have used a \$110,000 grant from ABC-TV to teach elementary schoolchildren how "to watch television with more than a blank stare." Even the National PTA has mounted the viewing-skills bandwagon—aided by grants from CBS and NBC, among others. So far, however, the first PTA lesson has yet to be written.

But it is Uncle Sam's interest in raising the TV consciousness of students that stands to have the greatest impact. The overall goal of the projects, according to Office of Education documents, is to help viewers "distinguish among a wide range of program elements so that they can make judicious use of their viewing time. The viewer should be able to understand the psychological implications of commercials, distinguish fact from fiction, recognize and appreciate differing and opposing views, develop an understanding of the style and content of dramatic presentations, documentaries, public affairs, news and →

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continued

other television programming. There should also be an understanding of the relation between television programming and the printed word, since most successful television programming begins with a verbal description and a script."

That's a tall order, and at least one critic believes the U.S. Government has no business issuing it. Last December Sen. William Proxmire of Wisconsin conferred his "Golden Fleece" Award on the Office of Education's grant to Boston University's School of Public Communications for the college-level viewing-skills curriculum. That dubious honor is bestowed monthly "for the biggest, most ridiculous or most ironic example of wasteful Federal spending." Proxmire states: "If education has failed to endow college students with critical faculties that can be applied to the spectrum of their lives, a series of new courses on how to watch television critically will not provide it."

Donis Dondis, dean of Boston University's School of Public Communications, calls Proxmire's charge "terribly unfair. Television has a profound effect on our values, judgments and actions." She and other defenders insist that television has special characteristics that can only be understood with proper study.

The Boston University course will teach, for instance, how economic factors determine television programming and scheduling. Students will develop their own commercials to explore techniques of persuasion, and they will plan and write newscasts to understand the constraints on TV news reporting.

On the high-school level and below, the TV-viewing lessons are intended to be folded into existing social studies and English courses. "We want to show that what we see on television is not necessarily real life. It is compressed and distilled and it must be resolved in a half hour, broken up by commercials," says Doug Smith, who is developing the high-school student guide

for the Far West Laboratory for Education Research and Development in San Francisco.

Reaching children in the lower grades demands even more imaginative approaches. The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in Austin, Texas, which is aiming at children from kindergarten to fifth grade, concentrates on lively stories to transmit its messages. There is See-More Frog, who dives to the bottom of a pond and discovers a school of fish who do little but watch television. See-More decides that he wants to learn "where the machine comes from and how the pictures get in the box." In another tale a girl named Suzie rediscovers the joys of tree climbing, bicycle riding and playing after-dinner games with her parents while the TV set is in the repair shop.

All the participants in the Office of Education projects emphasize that they are not trying to instill any particular point of view about television. Says Donna Lloyd-Kolkin of the Far West Lab, "We don't take an anti-TV point of view. Our major point is that TV is there and that people can watch it in more self-aware ways. There is nothing wrong with plopping in front of *Laverne & Shirley*, but people should be conscious of what they are doing and why they are doing it."

If the results of these various experiments are positive, critical viewing courses could eventually become as commonplace in schools as those enduring lessons in reading the newspaper. Imagine . . . a whole generation capable of assessing the acting, writing, characterizations and hidden messages in television programs, of identifying the use of camera angles and background music to heighten violent scenes, the effects of canned laughter in situation comedies and the limitations of the nightly newscasts. "If they really understand all that," says Debbi Bilowit, "it will put them 500 per cent ahead of most TV critics." ☐

In the fall of 1977, the United States Information Agency, predecessor to the present International Communication Agency, offered its tenth annual course in intercultural communication for mid-career officers. The course coordinator was Michael Prosser, Professor of Speech Communication at the University of Virginia. The Agency has published as a result of the course **USIA Intercultural Communication Course: 1977 Proceedings**. Single copies of the 350-page book may be ordered free by writing to Training Division, International Communication Agency, 1425 K Street N.W., Washington, DC 20547.

■  
The **Review of International Broadcasting** is a new publication for short-wave listeners interested in program content rather than the hobby of DXing. Each issue contains readers' observations and comments about international broadcast programming. Information is also included on station schedules and on current articles about world broadcasting. For information write to **Review of International Broadcasting**, c/o Glenn Hauser, Radio Station WUOT, 245 C & E Building, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37916.

■  
The Division of Educational Technology, U.S. Office of Education, has awarded a contract to the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, San Francisco, for "Development of a Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum at the Secondary Level." The Laboratory will work closely with Boston's public television station, WGBH, and with the Educational Testing Service, Berkeley, in this new curriculum development endeavor. For information write to Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, Director of the Curriculum Project, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

The Far West Laboratory also operates the Women's Educational Equity Communications Network (WEECN), whose director, Matilda Butler, has authored **Sex Stereotyping in Instructional Materials and Television: Awareness Kit**. WEECN is an information service and communication system established in 1977 and operated by the Far West Laboratory for the U.S. Office of Education under the auspices of the Women's Equity Act.

■  
"Literary taste, culture and mass communication" is the overall title of a 14-volume collection of over 200 published articles, books, lectures, and reviews on these topics which has been edited by Peter Davison, Rolf Meyersohn, and Edward Shils and published by Somerset House. Also available from the publishers is a new scholarly journal entitled **Publishing History**, which is devoted to the social, economic, and literary history of book, newspaper, and magazine publishing. For information write to Somerset House, 417 Maitland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666.

# Teaching the 'Basics' Of TV Viewing

Educators will get a first-hand look at the results of a government-sponsored television viewing skills project next year as the groups who are designing the courses prepare to hold teacher training sessions and workshops across the country. The U.S. Office of Education's \$1.6 million project, which marks the first time the government has sponsored a major effort to teach students to analyze both their own TV viewing habits and the messages they receive from the medium, will enter its second phase on October 1.

The groups this summer were completing the testing and evaluating of their materials and curricula by review committees and educators (including AFT members who were contacted through the union's national office) and are now submitting proposals to the Office of Education (OE) for training seminars. The classroom courses on critical viewing skills will be offered for four different grade levels and are being developed by four different groups: the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) in Austin, Texas (kindergarten through fifth grade); WNET/New York's education department (grades six through eight); the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development in San Francisco (grades nine through twelve); and Boston University's School of Public Communications (post-secondary). With the exception of Boston University, all the groups plan to hold many of their workshops and training sessions in conjunction with conferences of national organizations.

The courses will cover all aspects of television viewing and the television industry—such as production, advertising, programming

and program content, viewing habits, and the messages of television—although each course will vary in approach and style. The SEDL, for example, designer of the elementary school curriculum, has come up with various books, games, "cue cards," a TV log, and a teacher's guide. The Far West Lab, which is developing materials for high school students, has subcontracted WGBH in Boston for a curriculum that may be used as a one-semester elective or as part of an existing course.

Probably the most publicized curriculum—the one for post-secondary students—is from Boston University, which earned the unwelcome distinction of receiving Senator William Proxmire's "Golden Fleece Award" for what critics claimed was simply "teaching college students how to watch television." BU's curriculum, however, is not as simple-minded as the critics imply. Designed as a one-semester course, it includes a "behind the scenes" unit on networks and how they make decisions; the technology of television; "persuasive" programming such as commercials, public service announcements, and political advertising; entertainment programs, including an examination of stereotyping and violence; and information programming such as news and documentaries.

"We did have some negative responses," said BU project manager Toby Jacobs, referring to the "Golden Fleece" incident. "We try to handle it as best we can, try to explain what we're doing, and send material to those who write in." The publicity, however, has turned out to be a boon for the project. "We have many professors and department chairpersons who are interested in the project contacting

us for more information," she said.

Unlike the other groups, who will be presenting their workshops in tandem with conferences and conventions of national organizations, BU will be giving its training sessions at colleges, universities, community colleges, or junior colleges at about ten sites across the country.

Although the entire OE project has a potentially major impact on public awareness of the influence on television, it is still unclear how successful it will be in reaching its prime target—the classroom. So far, materials have only been evaluated and tested by small groups of teachers or review committees, with OE planning to conduct more extensive field testing sometime next year. At this writing, none of the four groups has formally published their materials as each continues to hunt for publishing houses with the right price tag and the fewest copyright complications.

Even if the courses turn out to be highly successful and useful to classroom teachers, however, there is one big hurdle ahead. As more schools are pressured to "return to the basics" and "eliminate the frills," the project is easy prey for local fiscal conservatives and education critics. With that in mind, much of the emphasis of the various courses has been on incorporating basic skills into the curriculum. "Most high school students will have spent more time exposed to the persuasive instruction and role modeling on television by age eighteen than they will have spent in the classroom," said Debra Lieberman, project associate at the Far West Lab in San Francisco. "A study of television is a study of social studies, economics, English, psychology, demographics, journalism, American government, home economics, and history." The course, she added, can increase skills in the basics of reading, writing, critical thinking, research, debate, and math. "The list is endless when you realize that television is a communication medium with content that can be studied and approached in a wide variety of ways." □



# Science Times

The New York Times

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Education,  
Style, Arts

C1

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## EDUCATION

### Course Will Teach Better Use Of TV

BY FRED M. HECHINGER

**F**IRST-GRADERS throughout the country may soon be listening to a story about a number of fish who spend all their time watching television in their small pond without knowing what goes on in the greater world. In the end, a venturesome frog returns to the pond to tell his bleary-eyed friends what they've been missing. The real world, he says, isn't quite what it seems on TV.

This modern fairy tale will be part of a national project called "Critical Television Viewing Skills" that has been underwritten by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and is being shaped into a new teaching tool by education and television experts in New York, Boston, San Francisco and Austin, Tex.

"The aim is to use TV instead of being used by it," says Debbi Bilowit, the project director at WNET-Channel 13, which handles the middle-school (grades 6 to 8) part of the new curriculum. Her plan is to develop 10 lessons to encourage children to form their own judgment about what they watch, when to watch and when to turn it off.

"We're not passing judgment on their programs," Miss Bilowit says.

Continued on Page C5

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# Course to Teach Better TV Viewing Habits

Continued From Page C1

"We're letting children do that for themselves."

The project includes a "family component" in which parents and children will be urged to view some programs together — critically and analytically. A teachers' manual will show how to merge the new lessons with existing instruction in reading, writing and social studies. Other manuals will be available to students, parents and teacher training experts.

It is in Austin's Southwest Educational Development Laboratory that Dr. Charles Corder Bolz, director of the elementary school segment, commissions fairy tales and other stories. "Our philosophy," he says, "is that TV is neither good nor bad, but that it can be a window on the world. We must help children, parents and teachers to use it properly."

Critical viewing and thinking, he continues, should start early. In one of the stories on the drawing board, a little girl saves her friend, the lizard, from drowning. She tells her story in school, and a TV camera crew records the heroic deed. Later, when she sees herself on the evening news, she finds that the camera didn't get all the details quite right, but her mother tells her why she has to make allowances for some of the difficulties in reporting a story second-hand, and also why she should not take everything as gospel truth just because it's on TV.

"We'll be teaching children the limitations of TV, but also how to get the most out of watching intelligently," Dr. Bolz says.

That includes dealing with "persuasion" — mainly, but not exclusively, commercials — and how to analyze

persuasive messages; how casting affects the sales pitch, as in the use of beautiful women to sell some products and of barely literate, not-so-beautiful people for others; and, of course, how stars lend their glamour and popularity to all sorts of appeals. In all units, students will be encouraged to research, check and verify what they see, and then draw their own conclusions.

Dealing with the high school segment, Dr. Donna Lloyd-Kolkin at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development in San Francisco, began charting the project two months ago, aided by nine students, with whom she and her colleagues watched their favorite programs. This list of the students' reactions was followed by a meeting of the curriculum review board composed of three teachers, three parents and four outside consultants.

The high school program will concentrate on skills in managing one's own TV viewing time, questioning the quality of programs, recognizing overt and covert messages both in news and entertainment, and assessing the effects of television on one's life.

The experts are anxious to avoid the antagonistic stance so many critics and reformers have assumed in their efforts to protect children and youths, largely without success. For example, they want to inform children about the economics of television, and what it takes to produce shows. There also will be discussions of Federal regulations and of the spirit and the letter of the laws, the Constitution and the First Amendment as they affect the medium.

As a teaching device, the project



George W. Stone

wants to have students ask their own questions, use primary documents, ranging from network annual reports to court transcripts, and reinforce the basic skills, including listening. Special teacher guides, intended to offer an inside look at network decision-making, are being developed by Public Television station WGBH in Boston. Programs also will be scrutinized for evidence of misleading stereotypes, the impact of heroes and antiheroes in TV fiction, and the many ways in which sound or shoddy values are transmitted.

Most of all, the new program aims at making young people recognize televi-

sion as only one of the many ways in which to see the world — more like the frog who ventured out of the pond than the fish glued to their submerged set. The ultimate goal is to transform transfixed viewers into critical participants who look beyond the screen to the story line, the characterizations, the ideas and lack of ideas, the overt or hidden persuaders.

Test runs will begin next month in a few high school classrooms in Boston, Chicago and the San Francisco Bay area. Channel 13 will soon start training sessions for teachers and parents in New Jersey, Iowa, Texas and West Virginia.



# TV TIMES

PALO ALTO TIMES, Wednesday, Dec. 20, 1978—21

Channel 2 - KTVU  
4 - KRON-TV  
5 - KPIX  
7 - KGO  
9 - KQED  
11 - KNTV  
14 - KCSM  
20 - KBAO  
32 - KQBC  
36 - KQSC  
44 - KPHK  
54 - KTHH

## Local lights...

THE FAR WEST LABORATORY for Educational Research and Development in San Francisco has received a \$208,000 grant—one of four—from the U.S. Office of Education to develop a curriculum to teach critical television viewing.

The courses, to be offered singly or as a group of seven, will be designed for high schools. The curriculum should be ready for launch by the fall of '79.

On another front, KQED Instructional Television, received a \$135,000 grant from Wells Fargo to continue its services to grammar school students. The money will be used to buy instructional series and equipment for participating schools.

KQED, channel 9, broadcasts educational shows twice each day during the week at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Such funds seem like a drop in the bucket considering the fact that production companies lay out nearly half a million dollars just to produce an hour-long car-chase cop show but every little bit counts. It's high time we, as viewers, learned to use television and not be used by it.

[Date]

[ADR]

Dear [NAME]:

Thank you for your interest in the Critical Television Viewing Skills Curriculum currently under development. The materials for classroom and home use are expected to be available for distribution by this fall. We are now exploring publication options and so I cannot tell you at this time how to order the materials. We will place your name on our mailing list and let you know about how to obtain them, and their costs, as soon as we know ourselves.

In the meantime, I am sending you a copy of a New York Times article about the K-12 curriculum that the U.S. Office of Education has funded, as well as an introductory statement that explains the goals and design of the high school curriculum materials and a draft outline of the seven units.

We think the classroom materials developed thus far are very exciting and will stimulate a great deal of critical thinking in students about television and its impact on their lives.

Again, thank you for your interest, and we will keep you informed about our progress.

Sincerely yours,

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin  
Project Director

Enc: NY Times article  
Introductory statement  
Draft outline

DLK/bh



# Science Times

The New York Times

With  
Education,  
Style, Arts

C1

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## EDUCATION

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# Course to Teach Better TV Viewing Habits

Continued From Page C1

"We're letting children do that for themselves."

The project includes a "family component" in which parents and children will be urged to view some programs together — critically and analytically. A teachers' manual will show how to merge the new lessons with existing instruction in reading, writing and social studies. Other manuals will be available to students, parents and teacher training experts.

It is in Austin's Southwest Educational Development Laboratory that Dr. Charles Corder Boltz, director of the elementary school segment, commissions fairy tales and other stories. "Our philosophy," he says, "is that TV is neither good nor bad, but that it can be a window on the world. We must help children, parents and teachers to use it properly."

Critical viewing and thinking, he continues, should start early. In one of the stories on the drawing board, a little girl saves her friend, the lizard, from drowning. She tells her story in school, and a TV camera crew records the heroic deed. Later, when she sees herself on the evening news, she finds that the camera didn't get all the details quite right, but her mother tells her why she has to make allowances for some of the difficulties in reporting a story second-hand, and also why she should not take everything as gospel truth just because it's on TV.

"We'll be teaching children the limitations of TV, but also how to get the most out of watching intelligently," Dr. Boltz says.

That includes dealing with "persuasion" — mainly, but not exclusively, commercials — and how to analyze

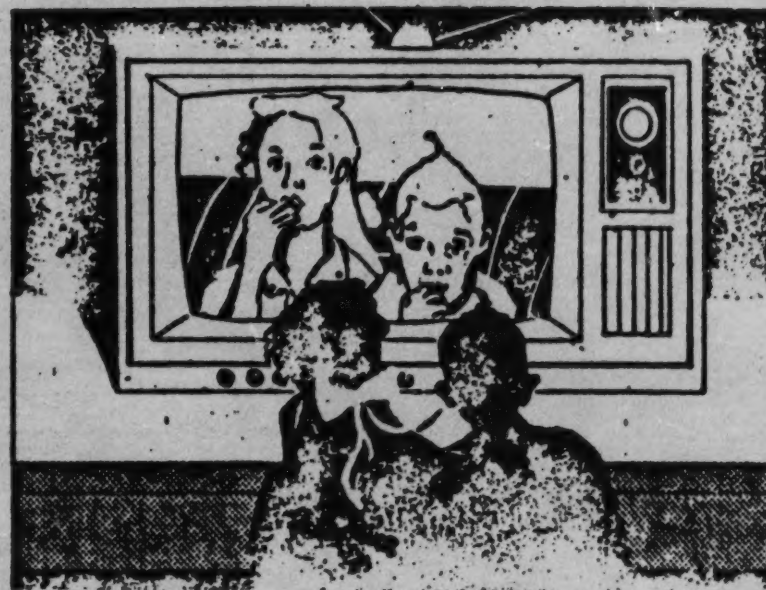
persuasive messages; how casting affects the sales pitch, as in the use of beautiful women to sell some products and of barely literate, not-so-beautiful people for others; and, of course, how stars lend their glamour and popularity to all sorts of appeals. In all units, students will be encouraged to research, check and verify what they see, and then draw their own conclusions.

Dealing with the high school segment, Dr. Donna Lloyd-Kolkin at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development in San Francisco, began charting the project two months ago, aided by nine students with whom she and her colleagues watched their favorite programs. This test of the students' reactions was followed by a meeting of the curriculum review board composed of three teachers, three parents and four outside consultants.

The high school program will concentrate on skill in managing one's own TV viewing time, questioning the quality of programs, recognizing overt and covert messages both in news and entertainment, and assessing the effects of television on one's life.

The experts are anxious to avoid the antagonistic stance so many critics and reformers have assumed in their efforts to protect children and youths, largely without success. For example, they want to inform children about the economics of television, and what it takes to produce shows. There also will be discussions of Federal regulations and of the spirit and the letter of the laws, the Constitution and the First Amendment as they affect the medium.

As a teaching device, the project



George W. Wainick

wants to have students ask their own questions, use primary documents, ranging from network annual reports to covert transcripts, and reinforce the basic skills, including listening. Special teacher guides, intended to offer an inside look at network decision-making, are being developed by Public Television station WGBH in Boston. Programs also will be scrutinized for evidence of misleading stereotypes, the impact of heroes and antiheroes in TV fiction, and the many ways in which sound or shoddy values are transmitted.

Most of all, the new program aims at making young people recognize televi-

sion as only one of the many ways in which to see the world — more like the frog who ventured out of the pond than the fish going to their submerged set. The ultimate goal is to transform transfixed viewers into critical participants who look beyond the screen to the story line, the characterizations, the ideas and lack of ideas, the overt or hidden persuaders.

Test runs will begin next month in a few high school classrooms in Boston, Chicago and the San Francisco Bay area. Channel 13 will soon start training sessions for teachers and parents in New Jersey, Iowa, Texas and West Virginia.

## A CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

### Introduction

Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, in cooperation with WGBH and Educational Testing Service, is developing a critical television viewing skills curriculum for high school students. The goal of the curriculum is to enable high school students to become active and discriminating television viewers. An active viewer is not a passive recipient of television information and effects; rather s/he has information to use in making choices. A discriminating viewer is one who can make choices--in viewing and among content--using personally derived and defensible criteria. Since television viewing is a major leisure time activity for most teenagers and adults in this country, as well as a source of both pro- and anti-social learning, the curriculum will be instrumental in providing teenagers with lifetime coping skills useful to them now and in their future roles as adults and parents.

### What are Critical Television Viewing Skills?

Based on a review of research about the effects of television, and interactions with students, parents, teachers, broadcasters and expert consultants, the following critical television viewing skills have been identified:

1. Ability to evaluate and manage one's own television viewing behavior.  
For many people, television viewing occurs almost unconsciously rather than as a result of deliberate and active decision-making. An active and discriminating television viewer chooses if, when and what to watch based on personal needs and criteria. This critical viewing skill will be developed by providing students with tools by which they can assess their own viewing behaviors and motivations in relation to personal goals and objectives as well as strategies for decision-making about television. Informed decision-making is also guided by a knowledge of potential effects resulting from television viewing (e.g. on health, learning, etc.).
2. Ability to question the reality of television programs.  
Television programs are the result of a series of economic, technological and production value decisions. Students need to learn to question what they see on television in terms of how it got there, why and what it means. To develop this skill, students need to learn about the business of television, how television programs are developed and produced, and to examine the images and

messages which are presented. Armed with a sufficient knowledge base about how television operates and with practice in questioning what they see on television, students will learn that television's "reality" can indeed be questioned and examined.

3. Ability to recognize arguments employed and to counterargue.  
The arguments employed on television include both individual persuasive messages (e.g. commercials) as well as repeated messages about problem-solving techniques (e.g. violence), desirable behavior patterns, etc. These messages can be analyzed in terms of both the structure and validity of arguments and the assumptions and values on which they are based. By examining the messages presented on television, students can identify persuasive techniques, and their fallacies, analyze values on which they are based and clarify and defend their own values and opinions in relation to the television messages.
4. Ability to recognize effects of television viewing.  
A wide range of potential television effects have concerned responsible citizens, including effects on health, leisure time displacement, stereotyping, aggression, etc. By becoming aware of potential effects of television, students can come to recognize the effects of television on them personally and to learn to be on guard against possible negative or dysfunctional effects in their own lives.

To facilitate development of these four critical viewing skills, students need to have an understanding of the following content areas.

#### Economics of television

Television is an industry where every decision is made for financial reasons. The economic structure of the broadcasting industry has an impact on consumers' pocket-books, program quality, viewing alternatives and ability to influence the media. The recognition that commercial television delivers viewers to advertisers rather than programs to viewers should result in a greater ability to question reality and recognize arguments and persuasive techniques.

#### How a television program is produced

People make television programs and every program must evolve from an idea through a script to production and editing. Understanding the decisions made at each point in the process and the constraints affecting these decisions will provide the student with knowledge to assess television's reality as well as to develop standards by which to judge program quality.



### Bases of television regulation

The airwaves belong to the people, and television is an industry regulated by governmental agencies. As television consumers, students need to understand the legal bases for regulation, public service constraints on the industry and the mechanisms by which individuals and groups can actively influence the nature of television programming. The option for exercising those rights is up to individual choice, but knowledge that mechanisms for change do exist is critical to a sense of active control over the influences on one's own life.

### Curriculum Design

The curriculum materials now being developed will include a student guide, a teacher guide and a family guide to encourage both classroom and home learning experiences. The curriculum units, described in the attached course outline, may be offered as a one-semester elective course or incorporated into existing social studies and language arts courses.

The curriculum will stress an experiential activity-oriented approach to learning. Design of curriculum materials is intended to enhance:

1. the development of critical thinking skills in relation to television, i.e. student guide materials will be designed to encourage students to develop their own questions about television, to find ways to locate information to answer these questions, and to assist them in evaluating and drawing conclusions from the information they find,
2. use of primary learning materials to the extent possible, e.g. use of industry and regulatory agency documents, television scripts, etc. as supplementary reading materials,
3. reinforcement of basic classroom skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and
4. progressive skill and knowledge building as the student proceeds through the curriculum sequence.

The curriculum is print-based to encourage widest use; however, audio visual resources and ways to access them will be suggested and their use encouraged.

### What Will the Materials Look Like?

The student and teacher curriculum guides will be compatible, while the family guide will stand as a separate publication. Current plans for student materials include ten or more learning units, each organized around a separate topic. One teacher's manual will accompany all of these units. Each student learning unit and accompanying teacher material will include the following:

#### Student Unit

1. Unit Introduction--states the purpose of the unit
2. Stimulus material--quote, case study, script excerpt, etc. to stimulate student interest and begin the questioning process
3. Exposition (1000-2000 words)--brief presentation of factual material to provide student with enough background information to further development of questions about the content area
4. Student Activities--a series of experiential learning exercises, e.g. programmed simulations through which students discover ways of answering their questions; preparing and conducting class debates; writing criticism, etc.
5. Supplementary readings--these will be drawn from a variety of sources, e.g. excerpts from network annual reports, articles from TV Guide, script excerpts, etc.
6. Vocabulary
7. Additional resources

#### Teacher Manual

1. Statement of student learning objectives
2. Discussion questions for teachers to use in assisting students to develop questions about the material contained in the unit
3. Additional facts and discussion questions to assist teachers in directing student questions
4. Recommendations for selecting, sequencing and using activities
5. Suggestions about how to use supplementary materials
6. Additional resources--bibliography of film and television programs, sources of other primary documents

In addition, the teacher manual will include suggestions about how to tie-in the units with existing courses, how to access film and video material and may include sample or recommended lesson plans.

Student materials will be prepared using a 7th grade reading level as a guide.

#### Who Should use the Curriculum Materials?

The curriculum materials are targeted to senior high school students and their teachers. Teachers of language arts and social studies will be most interested in using the materials although other disciplines may also find much of interest in the curriculum materials.

#### What evidence will I have that the course is effective?

Student, teacher and family curriculum materials will undergo formative evaluation testing by Educational Testing Service during the spring of 1979. A full summative evaluation involving approximately 1200 students in five geographical locations will be conducted in the fall of 1979.

DLK/bh 11/9/78



# DRAFT

## CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM OUTLINE (For High School Students)

### Unit 1: Introduction to Television Viewing

In this unit, the student examines and evaluates his/her own viewing behavior, compares it to others, generates own criteria by which to evaluate viewing, and learns about the effects of television viewing on his/her own life. Evaluation of the student's own viewing behavior occurs in the context of an examination of television and its unique characteristics. While the first unit focuses directly on the student's own life and personal viewing behavior, attention will be paid throughout the course on personal viewing behavior and will be specifically re-highlighted in the final unit.

### Unit 2: History, Regulation, Business of Television

Necessary to understanding television as a vast commercial industry is a grasp of technological and organizational history, from Vladimir Zworykin's invention of the iconoscope to the current state of television "art," and that distribution of television programming, from the beginning, was naturally considered part of American free enterprise. Basic federal regulations regarding television will be introduced so that the student will comprehend, from the start, what freedoms and constraints are imposed on the industry. Television will further be discussed as an invention of no parallel: that it embodies unique processes and effects. This unit fully considers the economics of television--how programs are financed, relationships between producers, networks and affiliates, etc. Future technologies and the debates regarding their regulation will also be introduced.

This unit provides a knowledge base required for fullest understanding of subsequent units.

### Unit 3: The Elements of Form

This unit enables the student to analyze dramatic television programs in much the same way they might approach a novel or short story. Dramatic elements such as plot construction, characterization and dialogue and scripting are discussed along with the constraints on dramatic form imposed by the nature of the television media.

Following this analysis the unit now considers how television production influences the nature of the programs we see. Content to be covered includes television production choices (video vs. film, types of camera shots and lighting, music track, etc.), economic constraints on production, types of persons employed and teamwork required to put a

program together and get it on the air. The outcome of this part should be a greater understanding that all TV programs are deliberately "staged" (and therefore "unreal") for technological and economic reasons. The student will also develop an appreciation of the singular aesthetic principles of television.

#### Unit 4: Advocacy Programs

Advocacy programming includes any television messages intended to persuade, e.g. commercials and political advertising. The orientation of the unit is on the identification of persuasive arguments and their counterarguments. This unit also introduces the student to the impact of television on politics, including voting behavior, political advertising, "image" politics, how political campaigns have changed, etc.

#### Unit 5: News/Information/Documentary

This unit focuses on news and informational programming in terms of the constraints on television coverage of the news, technological constraints, objectivity and social responsibility of newscasters, conglomerate ownership and gatekeepers, coverage of pseudo-events.

#### Unit 6: Television Programming Content

This unit will be critical to broadening the student's skill of determining the relative reality and unreality of what he/she sees on television, with special emphasis on the various elements in dramatic programming. Points to be considered in this section include examinations of the television Hero (and Super-Hero), characters as caricatures (the aggressive lawyer, friendly doctor, harried housewife, loving uncle), and other stereotypes which television perpetuates. Traditional programming will also be seen to diffuse a variety of behavioral and social "norms" that are generally thought of as non-reflective of the real world: that violence resolves conflict, that good always subdues evil, that youth and beauty are the pathway to happiness and success. The star system, bulwark of entertainment programming (including sports), will be seen as a way of generating new heroes and heroines for us while others decline, all for the sake of economics.

#### Unit 7: You and Television

This unit is a re-cap of the entire curriculum which gives the student the opportunity to reinforce and review the skills developed. Viewing behavior and any possible changes in the individual's viewing behavior can be examined and discussed. A major focus of the unit may be on the student's ability to write television criticism, bringing to bear all of the information on the economics, form and structure previously emphasized.

September 4, 1979

Contact: Debra Lieberman

(415) 565-3002



**FAR WEST LABORATORY**  
FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT  
1855 FOLSOM STREET - SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94103

-----FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-----

WATCHING TELEVISION WITH A CRITICAL EYE

Teenagers, their parents, and teachers will learn how to watch TV in a new way this fall. The Critical Television Viewing Skills Project, based in San Francisco, will conduct workshops nationwide designed to teach viewers to analyze their own viewing habits and the messages they receive from television.

The average student will have spent 15,000 hours before the television by the time he or she graduates from high school, compared to 11,000 hours in the classroom. "Television has a tremendous impact on our society. These workshops will help parents and teachers teach young viewers about the art and business of television, so they can make conscious decisions about what they watch and what it means to them," says Debra Lieberman, the project's workshop coordinator.

Under a contract with the U.S. Office of Education, the Critical Television Viewing Skills Project has developed a high school textbook about television which will be available for preview at the workshops, and a Family Guide to Television with games and activities to help families make decisions about television use.

For more information about the workshops, the high school textbook, the Family Guide to Television, and other developments in the field of critical television viewing write: CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING, Far West Laboratory, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, California 94103.



APPENDIX D

# HOW TO WATCH T.V. WITH MORE THAN A BLANK STARE



## WORKSHOPS TO ENHANCE CRITICAL VIEWING SKILLS

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### A WORKSHOP TO ENHANCE CRITICAL VIEWING SKILLS

**FOR:** Parents and High School Kids

**WHEN:** Tuesday, September 25, 1979 - 7 p.m.-10 p.m.

**WHERE:** Genesee Intermediate Education Center  
2413 West Maple Avenue  
Flint, Michigan 48507

**WHAT:** Donna Lloyd-Kolkin and Debra Lieberman of Far West Laboratory for Educational Research, San Francisco will focus on family decision-making about TV use and ways parents can help teenagers become more critical viewers of television.

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We are fortunate to be able to offer these workshops to you at no cost as this project is supported by a grant from the United States Office of Education. The presentors come to us from Far West Laboratory for Educational Research based in San Francisco. Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, Project Director, holds a Ph.D. in communication research from the Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University. Her major areas of study there have been the social effects of television on children and adults. Debra Lieberman, Project Associate, received a Master's Degree from Harvard University in the field of education and television. Both Donna and Debra have worked in the fields of education and media in a variety of roles.

For best results a team approach is recommended. Team up with other interested folks on your staff; including other teachers, media specialists and principals for the September 26, 1979 Workshop. The workshop will be of maximum value to teachers and students who, with their parents will attend - How To Look at TV With More Than a Blank Stare, on Tuesday, September 25, 1979.

For additional information call Ruth Winter, REMC 14 Media Consultant, (313) 767-4310, ext. 273 or Margaret Nielsen, Computer Assisted Instruction Consultant, (313) 767-4310, ext. 274.

HOW TO LOOK AT TV WITH MORE THAN A BLANK STARE: A WORKSHOP TO ENHANCE CRITICAL VIEWING SKILLS  
FOR  
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS, MEDIA SPECIALISTS, ADVOCATES PARTICIPANTS, AND ADMINISTRATORS

GENESEE INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION CENTER  
Wednesday, September 26, 1979: 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

( ) Yes, we want to participate. Please reserve a space for our team.

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| _____           | _____    |
| Name            | Name     |
| _____           | _____    |
| Name            | Name     |
| _____           | _____    |
| Name            | Name     |
| _____           | _____    |
| School District | Building |

There is no registration fee. Each workshop is designed for 100 participants, so you should register early to assure yourself a place. Reservations must be in by: Friday, September 21, 1979.

HOW TO LOOK AT TV WITH MORE THAN A BLANK STARE: A WORKSHOP TO ENHANCE CRITICAL VIEWING SKILLS  
FOR  
PARENTS AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

GENESEE INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION CENTER  
Tuesday, September 25, 1979: 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

( ) Yes, we want to participate. Please reserve a space for our team.

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| _____           | _____    |
| Name            | Name     |
| _____           | _____    |
| Name            | Name     |
| _____           | _____    |
| Name            | Name     |
| _____           | _____    |
| School District | Building |

There is no registration fee. Each workshop is designed for 100 participants.



PARENT WORKSHOP MATERIALS

CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS WORKSHOP  
FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS  
FLINT, MICHIGAN  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1979, 7:00-10:00 PM

Welcome and introduction....7:00-7:15

Bill Moyer's Journal: TV OR NOT TV?.....7:15-8:15

Discussion....8:15-8:30

COFFEE BREAK: opportunity to look at resource table....8:30-8:45

Slide presentation: description of Critical Television Viewing Skills  
Project and curriculum materials about television....8:45-9:15

Discussion of Family Guide to Television....9:15-9:30

Presentation of materials in workshop folders....9:30-9:45

Concluding remarks....9:45-10:00

WORKSHOP LEADERS

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin is Director of the Critical Television Viewing Skills Project at Far West Laboratory in San Francisco. A public television veteran, she holds a PhD in Communication from Stanford University and specializes in the use of television in the classroom.

Debra Lieberman, Project Associate with the Critical Television Viewing Skills Project, has taught courses in Educational Media and has worked in public television doing formative research and television production. She holds a Master's Degree in Education and Television from Harvard University.

## TV FACT SHEET

1. 98% of U.S. homes, or 72.9 million homes, have a television set.
2. 32 million homes have more than one set.
3. On Sunday nights at 9 PM, about 110 million people in the U.S. -- or almost half the population -- are watching television.
4. The "average" American family of five has the TV on 6.2 hours per day.
5. In 1978, LAVERNE AND SHIRLEY was the top-rated prime time program.
6. The typical one hour TV drama cost \$400,000 to produce in 1978-79; the typical made-for-TV movie cost about \$1,200,000.
7. A single 30 second TV commercial can cost up to \$200,000 to produce.
8. In 1979, it cost an advertiser \$80,000 to place a 30 second ad on 60 MINUTES.
9. The typical half-hour network news program contains about 22 minutes of news.
10. The "average" news item runs no longer than 45 seconds.
11. 45% of American homes watch news during dinner.
12. Two thirds of Americans get "most" of their news from television.
13. A U.S. government study in 1977 showed men outnumbered women on prime time TV drama almost 3 to 1.
14. From 1969-77, more than six out of ten major TV characters were involved in violence.
15. In 1977, there were over 6 acts of violence per hour of TV drama.
16. A 1973 study showed that heavy TV viewers (4 or more hours per day) were more likely than light viewers (2 hours or fewer per day) to:
  - overestimate the proportion of people employed as athletes, entertainers, and professionals
  - overestimate the crime rate for their area
  - overestimate their chances of being victims of violent crimes



# DRAFT

Once I thought the most important political statement we could make about television was to turn it off. But television can instruct, inform, and inspire, as well as distract, distort, and demean. And turning it off rejects the good with the bad. My family wants its voice added to the summons for quality, and I urge you to speak up, too, in every way possible. This marvelous medium, with all its potential for laughter and light, is worth fighting for.

Bill Moyers, television  
reporter

When you start hearing Barbara Walters talking about mass murder like it's a batch of oatmeal cookies, it's going to affect you.

California high school student

You know why they call television a medium?  
Because nothing on it is ever well-done.

Fred Allen, television  
comic of the 40's and 50's

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## FAMILY GUIDE

More than 98% of American homes are equipped with television. Four out of five have color TV, and about half have more than one set. In the average American home, the set is on almost six and a quarter hours a day. And, it's been shown, the larger the family, the longer the TV set is on.

Television, it seems, has become the indispensable American medium. We watch a lot of it. But do we watch too much? Do we use TV positively in our family life, or does TV use us?

Try some of the following exercises with your family. We hope that you'll have the opportunity to learn a little more about TV and how it fits into your life.

## HOW MUCH DO YOU WATCH?

To start, let's find out how much TV you and other members of your family watch in an average week. Use this form to fill in the total hours you spend viewing each day, and then total up your hours for the week.

### FAMILY MEMBERS

| Monday    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Tuesday   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Friday    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

(You may also wish to record the names of shows you watched for the week. If so, try to keep track of those programs that all or most of your family watched together).

### WHAT THE RESULTS MEAN ...

They could mean many different things. To find out, consider these questions:

- Were you surprised by the time you spent with television? Was it less or more than you thought?
- Do you remember times when the set was just "on," with no one watching? If so, why was it left on?
- How much time was TV viewing a family activity? What kinds of shows were popular with everyone? Which shows were not?
- Did you talk about those shows you watched as a family? What kinds of discussions did you have?
- Did you use your newspaper TV listings or TV GUIDE in helping you choose what to watch? Or did you just turn on the set to see what was on?
- Would you want to change the way TV is part of your family's life? If so, how?

## WHAT'S YOUR TVQ?

How much do you know about TV? Not about the programs -- or the stars -- but about the industry and the habit. Answers to some of these questions may surprise you, but they're the kind of thing that top TV executives think about when they make programming decisions.

Give yourself 10 points for each correct answer and then figure out your TVQ!

1. On a typical Sunday night, one out of every two Americans is
  - a. at the movies
  - b. watching television
  - c. knitting sweaters
  - d. reading
2. If you're a member of an average TV household, your tube is on more than
  - a. 40 hours a week
  - b. 50 hours a week
  - c. 60 hours a week
  - d. 70 hours a week
3. You're the ad manager for a new perfume called "Thirty Love," designed to appeal to active women ages 18-34 with its heady, sporty fragrance. To buy thirty seconds of commercial time on a top-rated prime time show, you will have to spend about
  - a. \$8500
  - b. \$15,000
  - c. \$25,000
  - d. \$40,000
4. You've just manufactured a banana-flavored soft drink called "Bingo" and you want to run a series of commercials showing everyday people comparing Bingo to other leading soft drinks. What is the position of the Federal Trade Commission (the agency that regulates television advertising) in regard to your ad campaign?
  - a. the FTC encourages this kind of advertising because it believes these commercials, when truthful, let people know about product differences.
  - b. the FTC discourages such ads.
  - c. the FTC allows you to run the ad, as long as you do not mention your competitor's name.
  - d. the FTC prohibits such ads.



5. Which of the following is NOT usually true of the typical television hero:
- a. he resorts to violence only when he has to
  - b. he is good looking, white and in his 30's
  - c. his beliefs often differ from those with great wealth or political power
  - d. he is married.
6. It has been shown that watching a lot of television colors the way people look at the world. Which of the following has NOT been shown?
- a. adult heavy viewers are much more likely than light viewers to own guns for protection.
  - b. heavy viewers who are children are more likely to think it's "all right to hit someone if you're mad at them" than light viewers.
  - c. in Hawaii, heavy viewers are better drivers than light viewers.
  - d. heavy viewers are more likely to be afraid of walking city streets alone at night than light viewers.
7. If the people listed below were in your family, who would be the one most likely to watch the most TV according to Nielsen statistics?
- a. Annie, age 8
  - b. Henry, age 15
  - c. Morton, age 29
  - d. Rhoda, age 59
8. The A. C. Nielsen Company measures our TV viewing habits. Their Storage Instantaneous Audimeter -- known to some as the "little black box" -- is installed in about 1170 homes and results in "ratings" which determine which shows stay on the air and which are taken off. Which of the following is NOT true about this device?
- a. it records only when the TV set is on, and to which channel it is tuned.
  - b. Nielsen pays families to have the Audimeter installed in their homes.
  - c. the identities of these families are kept secret.
  - d. the information gathered from these households measures the viewing habits in all American homes accurately.
9. If you owned a television station, your license to operate would come up for renewal every three years. The Federal Communications Commission is the regulatory agency which oversees this process. Which of the following is NOT an FCC guideline or law affecting approval of your license application?
- a. you should devote at least one hour out of 12 to public affairs programs such as news, talk shows, and consumer shows.
  - b. you should give "reasonable" time to important community issues and treat them "fairly."
  - c. your station should produce at least two hours of its own programming daily.
  - d. if you sell a half hour of time to a political candidate, you must offer to sell a half hour of time to the opposing candidate.
10. Violence on television, cause for much debate over the past 25 years, hit its peak in 1976 and is now on the downswing. TRUE or FALSE.

## TV Q ANSWERS

1. b. In numbers, this means about 100 million people.
2. a. 43 1/2 hours, to be more precise.
3. d.
4. a.
5. d. Most leading male TV characters are single. Interestingly, item c is generally true, indicating that we find appeal in characters who are in conflict with the top layers of established society.
6. c. In Hawaii, heavy television viewers were shown to be more reckless behind the wheel than light viewers.
7. d. Rhoda is in the heaviest-viewing group -- women, age 55 and older. Women in general watch more television than men. Teenagers watch the least amount of television, compared to other age groups.
8. d. The sampling can't be exact, and the Nielsen Company itself notes that ratings are really just estimates. Over a long period of time, however, a program's rating becomes more meaningful. Notice that the "little black box" can't tell if anyone's watching the set or, if they are, whether they're enjoying what they're seeing.
9. c. "a" is a guideline while "b" and "d" are strict regulations.
10. TRUE. Apparently, sponsors and TV executives have reacted to the public outcry against televised violence.

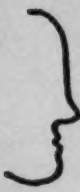
What's your TVQ? Give yourself 10 points for each correct answer:

- 90 - 100 points: Move over, Freddie Silverman!
- 70 - 80 points: You've got yourself a hit show!
- 50 - 60 points: Broadcasting may not be your "bag" but you've got good TV sense.
- 30 - 40 points: A lot to learn. There's more to TV than the on-off button.
- 0 - 20 points: Your show's been cancelled.

If, for one day, you could step into the shoes of a television hero or heroine, who would you be, and why?

## LET'S FACE IT!

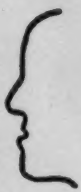
Television figures in family life in many different ways. Some of these issues appear below. Which way do you face? How does your position differ from that of other members of your family? Have each member of the family choose the number from 1 to 5 which best indicates where he or she stands. Then discuss your answers.



It's good for families to talk about the TV they watch. They can learn about each other.

1 2 3 4 5

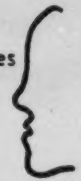
It's bad. A lot of families can't talk about these things without quarreling.




Our family often talks about what TV programs we all want to watch together.

1 2 3 4 5

Not my family. Whoever screams the loudest decides what program to watch.




TV is a way of bringing our family together -- it's fun to share something together.

1 2 3 4 5

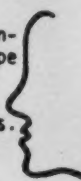
In our house TV is a good way for us to avoid each other. Turn on the set, sit down and stare at the screen.




We're careful about what we watch on TV. It's important to be selective, to know why you're watching a certain show.

1 2 3 4 5

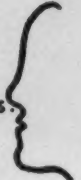
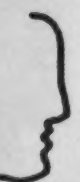
TV is almost all entertainment. It's a way to escape problems, to give your mind a rest. Just turn it on and see what happens.




Most characters on TV family shows don't seem very real to me, even though they're "realistic." They may be enjoyable to watch, but they're exaggerated.

1 2 3 4 5

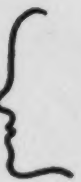
Characters on TV family shows are very real -- a lot like some of my friends and their families.

On the whole, I'd say my family could do with a lot less TV. There are other things we can do with our time that would be more valuable.

1 2 3 4 5

We need TV in our family. If we didn't have it, we'd all go nuts with each other.





## IS IT LIVE OR ON TAPE?

For a number of years, people have been studying what we see on television and comparing it all to what we see in the real world. Did you know ...

- Though about half the people in this country are women, only about a quarter of TV characters are female. And of those, an unusually large number are in the "young and attractive" category.
- Old people on TV are more often than not shown to be unsuccessful and unhappy.
- Glamorous careers are TV trademarks. Policemen, lawyers, doctors and others with exciting jobs are portrayed much more frequently than they appear in real life.
- Non-white males are more than twice as likely to be cast in comic roles on television than they are in other roles.
- While the number of violent acts on TV has declined over the last three years, hurting or killing someone is still shown to be an effective way to "solve" problems and conflicts (and keep viewers glued to their sets). Unfortunately many people -- especially young children -- learn some of their own behavior and standards from television and feel they, too, can resolve conflicts in this way.
- Family life on television is often shown to be almost too good to be true. The kids are cute and cuddly, the parents are patient and understanding, and when there's trouble, it's usually solved within an hour. For most of us, that's just not the way it is.

## KEEP YOUR ANTENNAE UP!

Commercial TV is a business that profits from drawing huge numbers of viewers. The more people who watch a program, the more money advertisers pay to reach them. Knowing that you are the "product" being sold (to sponsors) is an important first step in becoming a thoughtful and critical consumer of television. In the meantime, consider these points:

- o TV can be an effective tool in opening up communication in families and among friends. Don't be afraid to encourage conversation about some of the things you watch on TV together. There may be some bumps in the road, but you'll learn a few things, too. About each other.

- o People have different tastes in programs. Respect other people's opinions. There are no "right" or "wrong" shows to watch as long as people know why they're watching. (Is it an escape? Is it for information? For relaxation? Is TV a kind of companion? Or is it a way of avoiding communication with others?)

- o When you watch dramatic programs (situation comedies, westerns, police shows, soap operas, even cartoons), be critical about how things happen on TV as opposed to "real life."

- o When you're not happy about something you see on TV, there's more you can do than just turn off the set. Write to your local station or the companies that advertise on the program. Be clear and concise in your thoughts. Good letters are usually read and may make a difference. Don't hesitate to write letters of praise as well!!

## FINALLY. . .

Recent Gallup polls show that 31% of adults and 44% of teenagers believe they spend too much time watching television (far fewer than that believe they watch too little). Perhaps you're one of those who'd like to spend some of your TV time doing something else. Don't hesitate to take action, to make family and individual decisions. Chances are you'll be glad you did!

A mother, who happens to be an expert, too, tells how she and her daughter and television manage to live together in more or less peaceful coexistence

BY ELIZABETH J. ROBERTS

## HOW TO LIMIT TV WITHOUT A HASSLE



For a long while, I had a problem.

I felt... I knew... that Kristen, my three-year-old daughter, was watching too much television. Worse, I worried that her quick, bright, receptive mind was being sold distorted ideas of what people are really like and how they live and work together. It was a serious problem—I was anxious to solve it and thought I could do it easily.

I was young then. But working as the director of the Children's Unit of the Federal Communications Commission, I knew something about television—especially how it influences children's attitudes and shapes their beliefs.

The statistics that crossed my office desk were alarming. I read that more than 98 percent of the households in the U.S.A. have at least one television set—that's more than have indoor plumbing. Millions of families have two sets, one for the parent, or parents, and one for the children. Many have three.

Most children begin watching television at the age of two and a half and by the time they go to kindergarten many of them are veteran viewers, spending an average of 25 hours every week in front of the tube. By the time an American child graduates from high school, he or she has spent 11,000 hours in school and 15,000 hours watching television. I had reason to be concerned about what television might teach my child.

I don't mean to imply that television is an unmitigated evil. It can be fun. It can be informative. It can be uplifting. It is a storyteller that never tires, a rainy-day friend, a companion for the shut-in, a baby-sitter, a salesperson.

I knew all this, and I also knew it would take years for Kristen to reap the benefits of the work I and others were doing with the creators and regulators of the broadcasting industry to improve the quality of programs. For Kristen and for me it was not a

"national issue" but one of day-to-day living. How could she and I and the television set all live peacefully together?

At first, if I didn't like what Kristen was watching, I turned it off. That worked for a while. But, as any parent knows, turning off a television set—or even unplugging it—can't deter an ingenious four-year-old. And, as my daughter pointed out after one such incident, "It isn't polite."

Maybe she gave the wrong reason—politeness or lack of it had rarely influenced her behavior before—but her comment helped me realize that turning off the set in the middle of a program that I didn't approve of was not facing the real issue.

I decided first that I wanted her to understand that watching a television program was a deliberate choice, not simply something you turned on automatically, or idly, out of boredom. "Because it's there" may be a good enough reason to climb a mountain—but not for plunking oneself down in front of the television set. To reinforce my point, I moved our TV out of the living room into a less accessible place. We didn't have a den, so—even though I was inconveniencing myself, too—I moved our set into the hall closet. For the next couple of years both my daughter and I had to expend considerable energy to roll out the set, plug it in and adjust the antenna whenever we wanted to watch a program. Books, magazines and records remained easily accessible and frequently used.

Second, I wanted Kristen to know that spending too much time on any one activity can limit learning about other things. So we set rules about the amount of time she could spend watching television. When she was young, this meant she could watch only one hour each day. As she grew older, the rules became more flexible. Today, she and I go through *TV Guide* every Saturday morning and decide in advance how she will turn to page 76



*continued*

"spend" her weekly allowance of television watching time. I am not a stickler for acting according to the letter of the law; in our home rules get bent when there are special programs or a sick, homebound child. One rule, however, stands—no television watching until her homework is finished and all of her household chores are done.

Incidentally, setting rules about TV was not particularly difficult. Like most families, we have rules about many things, from brushing teeth to doing family chores, so rules on television watching did not seem unusual or unfair.

Third, I wanted Kristen to learn to look at television programming—and commercials—with a critical eye. I pointed out to her that television, like a book, tells stories. It talks to us and tells us about real and imaginary people and the world around us. As she grows, I want her to test the images she sees on television against those she perceives in real life.

Kristen is going to be nine this month, and with some trepidation (and a deep breath) I have agreed that within our negotiated time limits, she is now old enough to choose her own programs. After all, her friends talk about television programs the way adults talk about the evening news or the morning papers. If you don't know what The

Fonz has done on "Happy Days" or what problems have befallen Mary on "Little House on the Prairie," you simply aren't able to hold up your end of the playground conversation. I expect to gnash my teeth more often than smile with approval at her choices. At least at first.

This doesn't mean that I've abdicated my right and responsibility to let my daughter know how I feel about program content. She knows that I think there are more important things about a woman's body than its attractiveness to men. She knows that, even though most men on television never cry and rarely show affection, I think it's all right for men to cry and be tender. She knows that many mothers work outside the home and some fathers work at home. She knows these things because I talk back to the television set every time I watch it with her. And I do watch TV with my daughter—sometimes with the pleasure of sharing an exciting adventure together and sometimes with the feeling that I am just going to die of terminal boredom.

How much will my guidance influence her values and affect her choice of programs? I'm not sure. I remember well one conversation while we were watching television in which I pointed out—perhaps for the 987th time—that *that* portrayal of a woman was a stereotype, and she said, without looking up, "I know. I noticed it, too,

but I'm just trying to watch a story."

I do know that she is growing up in a world that will require an ability to make choices—choices, incidentally, that are more complex and far-reaching than those I faced during my childhood. I hope that in the years ahead, schools and other organizations will come to our assistance and help us "teach television" the way they teach home economics, parenting and social studies. There should be courses to help children understand how television programs are produced (they are really fiction) and why they are broadcast (to make money, for the most part) and what they say about values and beliefs.

Meanwhile, when my daughter turns off a program she has chosen to watch and shouts, "Boring," and runs outside to ride her bike, I feel we have made some progress. But I have learned never to be smug.

Several months ago I was appearing on a television talk show and gave my daughter special permission to stay up late to "watch Mom on TV." After five minutes of what I thought was scintillating dialogue, she turned to me and asked, "Do you mind if I watch the last half hour of 'Wonder Woman'?" ■

*Elizabeth Roberts is an Associate in Education, Harvard University, and Director of Project on Human Sexual Development.*

# Gallup Youth Survey

## Teens See TV Violence/Crime Link But Oppose Removal

By GEORGE GALLUP

PRINCETON, N.J.—A big majority of American teen-agers thinks there is a relationship between television shows which feature violence and the nation's crime rate.

But the latest Gallup Youth Survey found that fewer than one in three of these teens would favor removal of this type of programming from the air.

"I've babysat for a lot of kids—especially boys—who glorify violence and gunplay because it's on TV," said one 16-year-old girl.

"If a kid sees anything on TV he tries to imitate it," she said. "But as for taking these shows off the air, I don't know. Even though they show violence, they're a good, safe escape for most people—which they need."

A somewhat different viewpoint was expressed by an 18-year-old boy:

"Most people who watch these shows see that the 'bad guys' are always caught and the police eventually win, which serves as an example. I just don't think these shows influence the crime rate and, besides, they're fun to watch."

Whether there is or is not a cause-and-effect relationship between the viewing of murder and mayhem on television and the commission of crimes is, of course, one of the most contentious issues currently involving the medium. Some major advertisers, believing that such a relationship does, in fact, exist, or because of boycott threats against their products have discontinued sponsorship of TV shows which feature



violence, despite the fact that many of these are among the top-rated programs in the country.

When responses to the two questions are analyzed by the different socio-economic groups to which teen-agers belong, a remarkable unanimity of opinion is found. That is, teen-agers believe that there is a relationship between TV violence and crime to about the same degree, regardless of age, race, academic standing, father's occupation, and so on.

The same basic observation can be made with regard to the removal of violent TV programs. The single exception—and it is not a major one—is that boys are somewhat less likely to perceive a link between TV violence and crime than are girls and are also less apt to want violent TV shows removed from the air.

Other survey questions sought to determine the nature and extent of parental restrictions on both the amount of TV viewing and the types of shows parents permit their teen-agers to watch.

Nationally, only one teen-ager in five (21 percent) says that his or her parents place any restriction on the number of hours he or she is allowed to watch TV and only one in four (24 percent) says that his or her parents attempt to regulate the types of shows that are permitted. However, as might be expected, there are major differences in both regards by the age of the teen-agers involved.

For example, 28 percent of younger teens of both sexes (13-to-15 year-olds) cite a parental limitation on the amount of their TV viewing whereas the comparable figure for 16-to-18 year-olds is 13 percent. Similarly, 35 percent of younger teens say their parents will not allow them to watch certain types of programs, while 13 percent of older teens make this claim.

Finally, teen-agers who are restricted by their parents in their choice of viewing fare were asked what these constraints are. Programs that feature sex and violence, those that are suggested for mature audiences or for which parental discretion is advised are most susceptible to parental censorship.

Following are the questions asked and the principal findings:

"There has been a good deal of discussion lately about television shows that show violence—that is, gunplay, fist-fights, and the like. Do you think there is a relationship between violence on TV and the rate of crime in the U.S., or not?"

"It has been proposed that all television programs which show violence be taken off television entirely. Would you favor or oppose this?"

The findings are based on telephone interviews with a representative national sample of 1,087 teen-agers during the period October 17-30, Copyright 1978, The Associated Press.

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TV AND VIOLENCE/CRIME RATE?

|                     | Yes | No  | Not Sure |
|---------------------|-----|-----|----------|
| NATIONAL            | 67% | 31% | 2%       |
| Boys                | 63  | 34  | 3        |
| Girls               | 70  | 27  | 3        |
| Both sexes          |     |     |          |
| 13-15 yrs. old      | 66  | 31  | 3        |
| 16-18 yrs. old      | 68  | 30  | 2        |
| White-collar family | 68  | 30  | 2        |
| Blue-collar family  | 66  | 32  | 2        |

### TAKE VIOLENT SHOWS OFF TV?

|                                                      | Favor | Oppose | Not Sure |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|----------|
| NATIONAL                                             | 22%   | 73%    | 5%       |
| Boys                                                 | 17    | 79     | 4        |
| Girls                                                | 27    | 67     | 6        |
| Both sexes                                           |       |        |          |
| 13-15 yrs. old                                       | 22    | 73     | 5        |
| 16-18 yrs. old                                       | 22    | 73     | 5        |
| White-collar family                                  | 21    | 73     | 6        |
| Blue-collar family                                   | 23    | 73     | 4        |
| Is a relationship between TV violence and crime rate | 29    | 65     | 6        |
| Is not a relationship                                | 8     | 90     | 2        |

# **Gallup Youth Survey**

## **Teens Say They Watch Too Much Television**

By **GEORGE GALLUP**

**PRINCETON, N.J.**—Almost half of American teen-agers, by their own testimony spend too much time watching television, according to the latest Gallup Youth Survey.

While 44 percent of teens make this statement about their TV viewing habits, about one-fourth (24 percent) make the opposite claim, saying their own viewing time is "too little." The balance of those who express an opinion, 30 percent, say they are satisfied with the amount of time they watch the tube.

In striking contrast, only 4 percent of teen-agers think they spend too much time each day reading newspapers, while 76 percent believe they spend too little time following this pursuit. The balance of 20 percent feel their daily newspaper reading time is about the right amount or do not offer an opinion.

Between these two extremes, one teen-ager in seven (14 percent) thinks the amount of time he or she spends reading magazines is too much, 59 percent feel too little, and one-fourth (25 percent) are content with the time they spend with magazines.

From these Gallup Youth Survey results, as well as other evidence, it is possible to arrive at several tentative conclusions about teen-agers' attitudes toward the mass media.

First, it certainly must be encouraging for the print media that teen-agers themselves perceive the amount of time spent reading newspapers and magazines to be deficient.

Newspapers in particular have long been concerned about declining readership on the part of America's youth. That three out of four teen-agers think the amount of time they spend reading newspapers is "too little" may be interpreted as a desire to change this situation.

By the same token, the fact that a substantial plurality of teen-agers think the amount of time they spend watching TV is too much also implies a desire for change. (It is probably not



coincidence that TV has long been blamed for many of America's woes, including declines in the levels of educational achievement and an increase in youthful crime and anti-social behavior—associated by many with crime and violence on TV.

It is interesting to note that a considerably smaller proportion of adults (18 and older) think the amount of time they spend watching television is too much, in response to a similar question asked by the Gallup Poll. Whereas, as noted above, 44 percent of teen-agers nationwide make this claim, the figure for all adults is 31 percent. However, the figure for young adults (under 30 years old) is much closer, at 41 percent, to the teen-age statistic.

Certain groups within the total teen-age population are particularly prone to believe that they spend too much time in front of the TV set. These include younger teens of both sexes (13 to 15 years olds), of whom one-half, 50 percent, make this claim, compared to 38 percent of older teens (16 to 18 year olds). Also, youngsters whose school work is only average or below average are slightly more likely to think they watch too much TV

than their counterparts who do better academically.

With regard to preceptions of newspaper reading, the groups of teens who are more likely to criticize themselves for reading too little include girls, younger teens of both sexes, whites, and those whose academic standing is less satisfactory than that of their peers.

Following are the questions asked and the principal tabular findings:

The findings are based on telephone interviews with a representative national sample of 1,174 teen-agers, 13 to 18 years old, during the period February 24-March 6, 1978. Copyright 1978, The Associated Press.

### **TIME SPENT READING MAGAZINES?**

|                             | Too Much | Too Little | About Right Amount | Don't know |
|-----------------------------|----------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| <b>NATIONWIDE</b> . . . . . | 14%      | 59%        | 25%                | 2%         |
| Boys . . . . .              | 11       | 61         | 26                 | 2          |
| Girls . . . . .             | 16       | 57         | 25                 | 2          |
| <b>Both Sexes:</b>          |          |            |                    |            |
| 13-15 years old . . . . .   | 15       | 59         | 25                 | 1          |
| 16-18 years old . . . . .   | 13       | 59         | 26                 | 2          |
| <b>Academic Standing:</b>   |          |            |                    |            |
| Above average . . . . .     | 13       | 55         | 30                 | 2          |
| Average or below . . . . .  | 14       | 63         | 21                 | 2          |

### **TIME SPENT WATCHING TV?**

|                             | Too Much | Too Little | About Right Amount | Don't know |
|-----------------------------|----------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| <b>NATIONWIDE</b> . . . . . | 44%      | 24%        | 30%                | 2%         |
| Boys . . . . .              | 44       | 22         | 32                 | 2          |
| Girls . . . . .             | 43       | 26         | 29                 | 2          |
| <b>Both Sexes:</b>          |          |            |                    |            |
| 13-15 years old . . . . .   | 50       | 21         | 28                 | 1          |
| 16-18 years old . . . . .   | 38       | 27         | 33                 | 2          |
| <b>Academic Standing:</b>   |          |            |                    |            |
| Above average . . . . .     | 42       | 23         | 33                 | 2          |
| Average or below . . . . .  | 46       | 25         | 28                 | 1          |

### **TIME SPENT READING NEWSPAPERS?**

|                             | Too Much | Too Little | About Right Amount | Don't know |
|-----------------------------|----------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| <b>NATIONWIDE</b> . . . . . | 4%       | 76%        | 19%                | 1%         |
| Boys . . . . .              | 4        | 73         | 21                 | 2          |
| Girls . . . . .             | 4        | 79         | 16                 | 1          |
| <b>Both Sexes:</b>          |          |            |                    |            |
| 13-15 years old . . . . .   | 5        | 78         | 15                 | 2          |
| 16-18 years old . . . . .   | 3        | 73         | 23                 | 1          |
| <b>Academic Standing:</b>   |          |            |                    |            |
| Above average . . . . .     | 4        | 73         | 22                 | 1          |
| Average or below . . . . .  | 4        | 79         | 15                 | 2          |



## VIDEO AND VALUES

by Jack C. Morgan

Shifty eyes versus steady gaze, pleasant request versus harsh order, glowering visage versus clean-cut looks—telling the good guys from the bad is an easy matter in many TV shows. TV simplifies the real world, thus making value judgments easy to make and consistent with standard stereotypes. Even in those programs involving more complex values—the classic Robin Hood theme of robbing the rich to give to the poor, or the quandry of the young physician who feels morally bound to disregard the advice of a superior in trying to save a patient's life—the final scenes must resolve things within the bounds of the accepted value system. Values, in short, are an integral part of the hidden and not-so-hidden curriculum of TV viewing.

**Values Analysis.** In TV, as in written literature, stories deal with conflicts and their resolutions. Some end happily, some not, but whatever the ending, if television is to remain solvent, it must appeal to the widest possible audience, must base its stories on the most commonly held values. Thus TV offers a values definition for student study.

Children can look for the human qualities in TV stories, seeking answers to questions such as: (1) What problem occurred? (2) Why was it a problem? (3) How was the problem resolved? (4) What qualities seemed important in the principal characters?

Have children try to put themselves into the story situation, and ask them to guess at their own actions and reactions. They can also create, discuss and possibly act out alternative endings for the story.

Suggest that the children share their own experiences in resolving conflicts. They may wish to discuss whether a given television conflict resolution is realistic in terms of their own experiences.

**Moral Lessons.** At the simplest values level, some programs communicate either implicit or explicit moral lessons to children who watch them. Though such stories probably won't conclude with the moral intoned in a solemn voice-over, the lesson that is there shouldn't be hard for children to find. Some of the programs featuring families and some of the Saturday morning cartoon shows are likely locations to begin looking for lessons. Older children might be asked to watch particular shows and write a sentence or two about the lessons being offered. These interpretations

## TELEVISION'S CHILDREN

can later be discussed in class.

Try collecting a number of sayings: "Look before you leap," "Little strokes fell great oaks," "A stitch in time . . ." (Thumbing through Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations* may help.) Write them on the board and discuss their meanings; encourage the children to suggest a wide range of possible applications. Then have the students watch for TV stories that illustrate such sayings. Older students might want to try coining their own wise sayings in order to express the "moral" of stories they've watched.

**Commercials.** TV advertising topics and techniques can also be inspected for their treatment of values. Commercials, with their capsule stories and catchy phrases, are highly attractive to young children. Ask children to identify key words emphasized in the commercial. Are the words also shown on the screen? Are the words repeated? Which words are used the most? Examples might include *fresh, natural, pleasure, beauty, best* and *most*. Make a list of these words: explore their meanings and the feelings children have about them. Discuss why they are used.

*Social acceptance, thriftiness, cleanliness, fun, good health and attractiveness* are values that are emphasized in TV ads. To what extent are these values desirable and real-

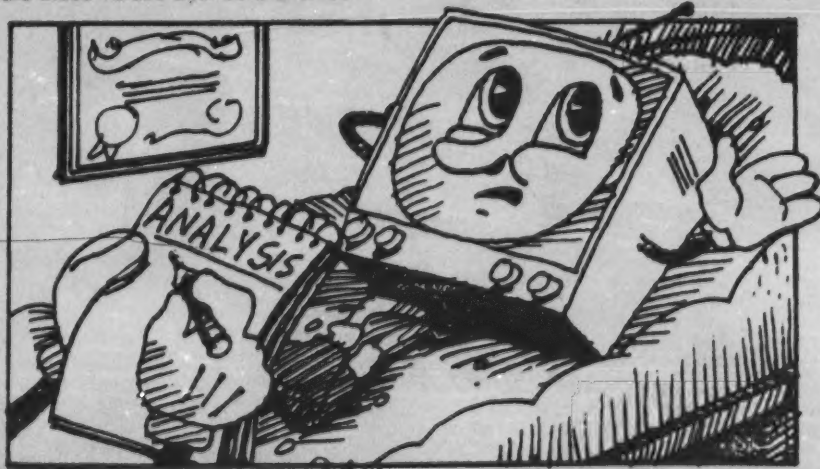
istic? To what extent do we accept these values on our own? Children, keying on value-charged words and phrases, might write their own 30-second commercials for pencils, candy or toys.

**What America Wants.** Beyond the stories and their sponsors, TV programming as a package carries a hidden curriculum that teaches youngsters the value priorities of adult Americans. Have children imagine themselves as visitors to America, completely unfamiliar with the ways of our culture (highly unlikely, but try it). Invested with their new outlook, children may be able to take up a basic question: What does TV tell about what Americans value?

Discuss what your "visitors" conclude from some of the following: a show in which people compete hysterically for large cash prizes; a story in which a child is remorseful after cheating on an exam; a news program covering war, assault, disaster, scandal; a three-hour baseball game; a documentary about an endangered species. What is it, you might want to ask, that Americans find entertaining, exciting, funny? What do Americans consider newsworthy? What qualities, conditions or material items do they seem to prize? Older children might try formulating descriptions of the "typical American" drawn from the images, impressions, interests and values depicted on TV.

Values are a part of us. Much of what we do is influenced by our collective values. As a mass medium, television provides one of the best common resources for helping a child analyze values—a first step towards developing his own value system. ■

Jack C. Morgan, professor of education, helped conduct a commercial television workshop for teachers at the University of Louisville, Ky.



Jeanne is not your typical high school student. She's 42, divorced, and a mother of a teen-aged daughter. In her class are other adults, as well as adolescents—an unusual mix. The "textbook" in these classes is even more unusual: an anthology of *Good Times*, *Police Story*, *Queen of the Stardust Ballrooms*, and other prime time television programs.

Jeanne is enrolled in an experimental program, funded by the Ford Foundation, at St. Mary Center for Learning in Chicago. She applied to the program, knowing that her classes would include teenagers, because she wanted to complete her high school credits. As it turned out, she was just one of many adults enrolled in the program who faced serious communication problems at home with their own teen-aged sons and daughters.

After a semester of encounters with the teens in her classes—evaluating the effect of undercover "narcs" in the hit school (*Police Woman*), attempting to justify a child's right to resist standardized testing (*Good Times*), and interpreting a daughter's opposition to her mother's remarriage (*Stardust Ballrooms*)—Jeanne knew that she had changed. In her written evaluation in May, she focused on the improved communication with her daughter, which she attributed to her open interaction with teens in these TV-oriented classes.

Another mother was equally convinced of the effectiveness of television as a vehicle for sensitive dialog be-

tween the generations. She chose an episode of *Sunshine* as the occasion to talk with her seven-year-old son about the death of his father, who had not lived with them for several years.

The classes in this experiment are based on an ancient Greek phenomenon. In ancient Athens citizens of all ages shared the same theater, the same mythic stories and heroes. The Greeks accepted the significance of this link in the development of their shared values. Their pervasive literature was meshed with education, religion, and government as a method of communicating meaning.

Similarly, persons of all ages in our culture share the same theater, stories, and heroes. The new epic heroes have a strange array of names and roles as compared to the Greeks—Hawkeye, Columbo, Florida, Olivia Walton, Kojak, Fred Sanford—but their mythic purpose is not that different. The one big difference is that educators and citizens generally do not accept the significance in our culture of the TV link, of what Daniel Boorstin refers to as "democratized experience." They do not seem to see TV's common mythic literature as a method of communicating meaning among generations, cultures, and economic classes.

In our attempt at St. Mary's to capture the network of myth and meaning in television literature and to exploit its strengths rather than damn its violence or mediocrity, we've developed our own informal set of prime time principles.

The following "do's and don'ts" are my own impression of where experience and experimentation have taken us.

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### 1. Don't stroke one another's literateness with clever kitsch remarks about television.

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Several years ago in Texas, where I was offering a video workshop, a veteran teacher announced to the group that she had a problem because she "didn't watch enough of that trash." Then she did a doubletake, and in an open acknowledgement of what she suddenly recognized in herself, she exclaimed, "No, my problem is that I think of it as trash." How I respected that woman!

This incident is typical of McLuhan's warning to us a decade ago that the uniform failure of education over the centuries has been its refusal to admit

that the prevailing culture is also culture to be appreciated. I cringe to think of the number of times I've silently discredited myself as I listened to a revered "other" speak sarcastically about something I really liked. Then I think of the number of high school students who simply can't afford to be discredited one more time.

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### 2. Do avoid the Jacques Cousteau Syndrome . . . a state of selective perception which sees television as something worthwhile every so often.

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TV specials have educational value, but that value is very different from the mythic recognition in the repeating series forms. *MASH*, *Rhoda*, and *Good Times* have created heroic characters who are culturally shared in eighteen million homes every week. They have introduced story patterns that are so well understood that almost no one is barred from participation or curtailed off from their significance.

Our decision at St. Mary's to seek a controlled experiment with popular television was based on our use of prime time shows for five years. We found that students responding to TV literature rarely appeared shy or unready or under-achieving. In one freshman class, a mere 14 students among 230 were identified by teachers as reserved about TV-oriented discussion or as-

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# USING KIDS ON



signments. Through interviews we discovered that all of these students had spent their childhoods isolated from television, in most cases in Mexico. Even those teens who watch very limited television because of jobs and new mobility have a log of childhood viewing that is both lore and patterning for viewing current programs without dissonance.

### 3. Don't set demythologizing TV as a major course objective without seeking student input.

This objective supposes that adolescents cannot differentiate between script elements chosen for their filmic entertainment value and those chosen for their documentary value. It supposes that young viewers don't know that 40-minute story endings are more contrived than life itself.

I have a special TV Rorschach that I use with teachers on this point. It's a gangster version of *Macbeth* and a gunsmoke version of *Antigone*, with multiple-choice endings. Fewer than ten per cent of the teachers tested have chosen the endings created by Shakespeare and Sophocles, those classic Nielsen giants. Both endings are, of course, violent. On the other hand, the TV generations are scoring over eighty per cent, though many of them have never read the original plays.

It's just possible that the TV babies, in the process of suppressing their lin-

ear skills watching television, have emphasized their sense of the dramatic—overstatement, exaggeration, condensed life, and symbol. This mythic line is a distinguished literary genre and deserves to be treated as literature unless it makes claims of documentation. Why include the Oracle in a weekly current events quiz?

In cases such as the use of *Police Story* by the police academies, instructors report that a brief discussion in class usually exposes the show business elements. Then, while the class is still emotionally involved in the dramatic realities, the police cadets can attack the real objectives: a discussion of authority figures, defense mechanisms, and the dangers of "us versus them" attitudes.

### 4. Do keep the objectives conceptual and process-oriented. Don't attempt factual content-oriented results, especially if the content needs to be treated in a definite sequence.

Despite the wealth of stories and information in any one week of network television, the availability of specific content is unpredictable. However, abstract concepts—oppression, integrity, maturity, justice, hypocrisy, revenge, ambition, courage—are readily found in TV series programs.

The processing in class that follows each program can emphasize the variety of meanings for that concept within the group itself. For instance, a good basis for an initial defining of "integrity" would be an episode of *MASH*. A good start on the concept of "ambition" would be *The Jeffersons*. I used an episode of *Baretta* to introduce the concept of "conscience" as a prologue to *Macbeth*. Students later decided that Shakespeare would have liked Baretta's favorite line in the mouth of Macduff—"You gotta pay your dues!"

Another way to process the TV experience conceptually is to capitalize on a consensus meaning or to break up a consensus meaning. An honest group consensus can be an extremely humanizing experience. One vivid example stands out in my mind. Shortly after the tragedy of Attica, Dick Cavett interviewed several of the prison guards. One was hot and vengeful, alienating the audience. Another guard in his fifties, who had been a hostage, was calm and nonjudgmental. He described his

imaginings as he sat blindfolded in the prison yard: "I heard the noise of a helicopter overhead. We had heard that the governor would come, and I thought of the Enterprise coming to bring reason and an end to the hostility." The audience applauded. Cavett's face broke into a knowing smile. It was as though the guard had stumbled on the Rosetta Stone, translating a uniquely personal experience into a mythic "Star Trek" zone familiar to millions. We knew what he meant by mediation and what he saw as the correct resolution to the riot. A perfect allegory was scripted, the millions sensed shared meaning and goals!

The need to break up a consensus is often easier to recognize than it is to provide for at the moment it's needed. For example, in looking at the concept of power last year with an episode of *Planet of the Apes*, students agreed unanimously that power comes from sophistication and that sophistication is synonymous with being very smart. Though they admired Caesar, the ape-hero, they believed that the human space scientists were more powerful and effective.

Fortunately, the next evening's *Lucas Tanner* concerned Tanner's difficulties with an eleven-year-old child prodigy who is placed in Tanner's junior English class. Without socialization skills the prodigy alienates individuals in the class and becomes a rejected malcontent. This story of the prodigy broke up the consensus—an important event for the group's freshmen and sophomores who had been suffering from a sense of intellectual inferiority since third grade.

### 5. Finally, do watch enough single programs in any one series to understand its repeating form.

Familiarity is essential to an appreciation of how a specific series works: the evolving qualities of the characters, the variety of settings and how they are used to alter the comic or dramatic tension, the values that the series is based on and develops. Students must

Continued on page 56

# WHAT WATCH TV

Ann Christine Heintz



## Using TV

*Continued from page 43*

know you're "into" a series, not just bringing the series into the classroom.

Familiarity also makes it possible to use the TV program listings more effectively. (We prefer *TV Guide* because it comes out earlier than the newspaper Sunday supplements.) The *Baretta* episode that was such an ideal introduction to *Macbeth* was chosen because of the main character's monologue technique with his pet bird, together with the overt violence of the scripts—both in the best tradition of Shakespeare. The description in *TV Guide* merely stated: "A former mugger who had become a religious convert is identified as the cat burglar who injured a man's wife while escaping from their apartment."

Because programming notes are usually sketchy, teachers are bound to miss some ideal material the first time around. They can only hope that the episode's re-run will fall during the school year at a time when it can be used appropriately.

Reading the new *TV Guide* each Thursday night is a habit with our teaching team. Even if we do not select any of the weekend shows for classroom use, we know that most of our students—most of the nation—will be viewing them anyway. Mary Richards will further establish her womanhood and her mores as certainly as Helen of Troy; the Fates will continue to care for Kojak as they did for Aeneas.

What the nation will probably not do—though we hope our students will—is to respect the culture as it is, to be awed by its pervasiveness and the commonality of its symbols. If that were to happen, a TV methods explosion would certainly follow. We'd have a weekly teacher's supplement to *TV Guide*, a special pink section in *Family Circle* called "Television Sharing," and even an esoteric article in some academic journal on "Would Troy have objected to the *Odyssey* the same as Boston did to *Welcome Back, Kotter*?"

But lacking that awareness nationally, we continue to experiment in class with people like Jeanne, waiting to see whether the evaluation will prove our point and persuade a tardy nation. □



## What if Wonder Woman teamed up with the Hulk?

Asking children the right questions about television can turn viewing into a learning experience

By Raymond Coppola

By the time a child has finished high school, he has devoted 12,000 hours to school—and 15,000 hours to television!

Parents who watch their children

Raymond Coppola is a curriculum specialist and educational supervisor for the New York City school system. This article is adapted from a chapter in his book, "Successful Children," copyright © 1976 by Raymond Coppola and published by Walker and Company.

pass those precious years sitting catatonically before the glowing box have good reason to be alarmed.

What can concerned parents do?

With a little imagination and effort, they can do a great deal. But first, let's examine what is so attractive about this powerful medium.

Think about your child's response when you ask him about a subject in school. Now compare that to when you

ask him about his favorite TV program. Almost always, the TV question will produce an excited reply. Television breeds excitement. The trick is to make the child understand what it is that he is excited about. The most important subject area that children learn in school is Language Arts, and Language Arts is about one thing: communication. How to read, write and comprehend. Television sends carloads of information and ideas into the receptive minds of our children. What we need to do is to help the child realize what is there and put it to his own use.

To do this, we must change our custom of not talking while the set is on; we should encourage conversation:

☐ Watch a show with your child and, during the commercial, discuss the different characters and how they are behaving.

☐ Leading questions, such as "What would you do to capture the criminal?" or "How do you think this story will end?" will help your child to expand his imagination.

☐ At the end, ask the child to repeat the story, naming characters and narrating the plot.

These exercises will provide as much practice in concentration, retention and sequencing of ideas as any exercise in school.

Like it or not, television is creating values for your children. Talking while the set is on increases a critical awareness of what is being watched.

☐ What is that commercial really saying the product does?

☐ Have they given any proof about what they are saying?

☐ If you keep seeing the same thing again and again, does that mean it is good for you?

☐ How do you go about learning about a product?

Children can be made much more attentive to news programs and talk shows if you discuss what they are going to see beforehand and after, too.

☐ Compare what happened in their lives today with what is on the news.

☐ Ask them to remember what happened yesterday or if they can predict what will be on the news.

Watch the broadcasts of two different stations and compare how they present the same story. Are there any examples of bias or misleading use of facts?

☐ Make your child aware that out of an entire speech only a few minutes may be shown and that the broadcaster may sometimes present not what is most important but what is most exciting.

☐ Have your child compare what he has noticed about the weather with what the weather report says. Have him write to the weather broadcaster to ask questions about the weather.

☐ Before a talk show discuss with your child who the person being interviewed is, what you might learn from him and what questions your child would like to ask.

Taking a few minutes to prepare before a show can increase your child's powers of observation and awareness. Before viewing a show on animal life, have your child look up the subject in the encyclopedia and compare this knowledge with that presented in the show. Have him list the key facts he learned from the program and discuss these with him.

Talking about what is seen on television can be extended further by encouraging your child to have paper and pencils nearby when watching television.

For vocabulary development, have your child write down new words he hears. During commercials he can look them up in the dictionary.

For practice in math he could be the official scorekeeper whenever he is viewing a sports program. This does not mean just adding up the runs or points. He could record the players the number of hits, errors, how the outs were made, ball changeovers, —

continued

sols won or any other additional information relating to the sport being viewed.

For young children there is no better way to teach how to tell time than by using the child's favorite television programs as a base. Make sure that he or she looks at the clock at the beginning and end of each show and states the time. He can even draw a "Time Book" that includes the name of the show, day, and a picture of a clock to indicate what time the show was on the air.

Questions about why a child likes a show and what was in it may lead him to want to keep a critical review of the show he watches. This can be short—a half page to a page—and can include the name of the show, time and day shown, type (drama, situation comedy, documentary), main characters, plot, theme or message, new vocabulary words, sponsors of the show, and why the show was good or bad. Older children may want to include more sophisticated questions: What was the turning point of the show? Did the characters change and, if so, how? If you were the director or writer, how would you have improved the show? Another writing exercise most children enjoy is writing to their favorite performers to ask them questions about acting, singing, their careers and other interests.

If left to itself, television's literalism might discourage the child's need for imaginative escape when TV should really be encouraging further flights of fancy. If your child tends to ignore books, you can get him going by buying books in paperback or comic-strip form that relate to his favorite programs. *The Waltons*, *Little House on the Prairie* and similar shows are available in paperback. The tremendous success of the paperback of *Rich Man, Poor Man* while the miniseries based on it was running testifies to how powerful television can be in leading viewers to books.

Further flights of fancy can be explored by having your child create a story from a scene in his favorite TV program. Once he starts to re-create a scene, he usually begins writing dialogue, action and is quickly off on a story of his own. For more fun, why not suggest to your child a story combining characters from his favorite shows? What would happen if Wonder Woman teamed up with the Hulk? Younger children may want to draw and color pictures of these stories of their own invention and then dictate the story to the parent to write down.

Once children are in the habit of talking and writing about what they watch, they can be stimulated by how a TV show compares with their own lives. When watching a drama or documentary about the past, fascinating discoveries can emerge from comparisons of modes of dress, ways of travel, types of entertainment, methods of communication, kinds of foods and housing, life styles, religious and political beliefs.

Programs set in the present day abound in information about possible career choices in our society. What does a show reveal about the life of a policeman, surgeon, journalist, lawyer, teacher, private detective, politician, coroner, psychiatrist, housewife, movie star? When a show is a comedy, how does the treatment of the career change? After a child's interest is engaged and he has begun to think independently and critically about what he is watching, it should be easier to get him to read books on the historical period and to compare the different accounts.

All of which argues that there is no reason why the awesome energy and immediacy of TV should be seen as education's enemy. With pencil, paper and a quiver of questions, parents can use this multipurpose learning tool to make education as compelling and adventurous as the children of television deserve. ☐



RESOURCE LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS

TELEVISION

The four U.S. Office of Education projects in Critical Television Viewing Skills are directed by:

Dr. Charles Corder Bolz, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory,  
211 East 7th Street, Austin, Texas 78701; curriculum for grades K-4.

Ms. Debbie Bilowit, WNET-Channel 13, 356 West 58th Street, New York,  
New York 10019; curriculum for grades 5-8.

Dr. Donna Lloyd-Kolkin, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and  
Development, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, California 94103;  
curriculum for grades 9-12.

Dr. Donis Dondis, Boston University School of Public Communication,  
640 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02215; post secondary.

Action for Children's Television, Inc., 46 Austin Street, Newtonville, MA 02160;  
citizen action group to improve children's programming and advertising.

CBS Television Reading Program, CBS Entertainment Division, 51 West 52nd Street,  
New York, NY 10019; scripts and teacher guides to selected CBS TV programs.

Center for Science in the Public Interest, 1770 Church Street, N.W.,  
Washington, D.C. 20036; publishes information offering alternatives to  
the junk food advertised on television.

Council on Children, Media, & Merchandising, 1346 Connecticut Avenue,  
Washington, D.C. 20036; consumer interests of children.

Federal Communications Commission, Public Information Office, 1919 M Street, N.W.,  
Washington, D.C. 20554.

National Association for Better Broadcasting, P.O. Box 43640, Los Angeles,  
California 90043; quarterly newsletter: "Better Radio and Television."

National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, 1028 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.,  
Washington, D.C. 20036.

National Correspondence Group, P.O. Box 1039, Palo Alto, California 94302;  
publish "Target List" of sponsors of TV programs with high violence levels.

National PTA TV Action Center, 700 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611;  
citizen action, monitoring of TV programs.

Office of Communication, United Church of Christ, 289 Park Avenue South,  
New York, NY 10010; list of publications, offer consultation and  
legal assistance to improve programming.

Prime Time School Television, 120 South LaSalle, Room 810, Chicago, Illinois 60603;  
teacher guides to prime time TV programs, published monthly.

Teachers' Guides to Television, Teachers' Guides Company, 699 Madison Avenue,  
New York, NY 10021; Parent Participation Workshops, teacher guides to  
selected NBC prime time programs.

Television Awareness Training, Media Action Research Center, Inc., 475 Riverside  
Drive, NY, NY 10027; community workshops about television's messages.

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Winn, Marie, The Plug-in Drug: Television, Children and the Family (New York: Grossman, 1977).

## CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS

### Workshop Evaluation

1. How would you rate the quality of this workshop?  
☐ Excellent    ☐ Good    ☐ Fair    ☐ Poor
2. Did the workshop presentations give you a clear idea of what critical television viewing skills are?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
3. Did the workshop presentations give you a clear idea of the importance of teaching teenagers to become critical television viewers?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
4. Did the workshop presentations provide you with ideas on how to encourage your teenagers to become critical television viewers?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
5. Did you enjoy the workshop?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
6. What was the best part of the workshop for you?    the least interesting?  
Best:  
  
Least interesting:
7. Did you have sufficient opportunity to share your ideas with others?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
8. Did you have sufficient opportunity to ask questions?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
9. Do you have any suggestions about how to improve the workshop to make it more helpful to other parents?



TEACHER WORKSHOP MATERIALS

CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS WORKSHOP  
FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS  
FLINT, MICHIGAN  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1979, 3:00-6:00 PM

Welcome and introduction....3:00-3:15

Slide presentation: description of the Critical Television Viewing Skills  
Project and high school textbook about television....3:15-4:00

Discussion of excerpt from the textbook and teacher guide....4:00-4:30

COFFEE BREAK: opportunity to look at curriculum materials on the  
resource table....4:30-4:45

Small groups evaluate student activity sheets....4:45-5:15

Reports from small groups....5:15-5:30

Resources in workshop folders are discussed....5:30-5:45

Concluding remarks....5:45-6:00

WORKSHOP LEADERS

Donna Lloyd-Kolkin is Director of the Critical Television Viewing Skills Project at Far West Laboratory in San Francisco. A public television veteran, she holds a PhD in Communication from Stanford University and specializes in the use of television in the classroom.

Debra Lieberman, Project Associate with the Critical Television Viewing Skills Project, has taught courses in Educational Media and has worked in public television doing formative research and television production. She holds a Master's Degree in Education and Television from Harvard University.

## TV FACT SHEET

1. 98% of U.S. homes, or 72.9 million homes, have a television set.
2. 32 million homes have more than one set.
3. On Sunday nights at 9 PM, about 110 million people in the U.S. -- or almost half the population -- are watching television.
4. The "average" American family of five has the TV on 6.2 hours per day.
5. In 1978, LAVERNE AND SHIRLEY was the top-rated prime time program.
6. The typical one hour TV drama cost \$400,000 to produce in 1978-79; the typical made-for-TV movie cost about \$1,200,000.
7. A single 30 second TV commercial can cost up to \$200,000 to produce.
8. In 1979, it cost an advertiser \$80,000 to place a 30 second ad on 60 MINUTES.
9. The typical half-hour network news program contains about 22 minutes of news.
10. The "average" news item runs no longer than 45 seconds.
11. 45% of American homes watch news during dinner.
12. Two thirds of Americans get "most" of their news from television.
13. A U.S. government study in 1977 showed men outnumbered women on prime time TV drama almost 3 to 1.
14. From 1969-77, more than six out of ten major TV characters were involved in violence.
15. In 1977, there were over 6 acts of violence per hour of TV drama.
16. A 1973 study showed that heavy TV viewers (4 or more hours per day) were more likely than light viewers (2 hours or fewer per day) to:
  - overestimate the proportion of people employed as athletes, entertainers, and professionals
  - overestimate the crime rate for their area
  - overestimate their chances of being victims of violent crimes



## A CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

### Introduction

Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, in cooperation with WGBH and Educational Testing Service, is developing a critical television viewing skills curriculum for high school students. The goal of the curriculum is to enable high school students to become active and discriminating television viewers. An active viewer is not a passive recipient of television information and effects; rather s/he has information to use in making choices. A discriminating viewer is one who can make choices--in viewing and among content--using personally derived and defensible criteria. Since television viewing is a major leisure time activity for most teenagers and adults in this country, as well as a source of both pro- and anti-social learning, the curriculum will be instrumental in providing teenagers with lifetime coping skills useful to them now and in their future roles as adults and parents.

### What are Critical Television Viewing Skills?

Based on a review of research about the effects of television, and interactions with students, parents, teachers, broadcasters and expert consultants, the following critical television viewing skills have been identified:

1. Ability to evaluate and manage one's own television viewing behavior.  
For many people, television viewing occurs almost unconsciously rather than as a result of deliberate and active decision-making. An active and discriminating television viewer chooses if, when and what to watch based on personal needs and criteria. This critical viewing skill will be developed by providing students with tools by which they can assess their own viewing behaviors and motivations in relation to personal goals and objectives as well as strategies for decision-making about television. Informed decision-making is also guided by a knowledge of potential effects resulting from television viewing (e.g. on health, learning, etc.).
2. Ability to question the reality of television programs.  
Television programs are the result of a series of economic, technological and production value decisions. Students need to learn to question what they see on television in terms of how it got there, why and what it means. To develop this skill, students need to learn about the business of television, how television programs are developed and produced, and to examine the images and

messages which are presented. Armed with a sufficient knowledge base about how television operates and with practice in questioning what they see on television, students will learn that television's "reality" can indeed be questioned and examined.

3. Ability to recognize arguments employed and to counterargue.  
The arguments employed on television include both individual persuasive messages (e.g. commercials) as well as repeated messages about problem-solving techniques (e.g. violence), desirable behavior patterns, etc. These messages can be analyzed in terms of both the structure and validity of arguments and the assumptions and values on which they are based. By examining the messages presented on television, students can identify persuasive techniques, and their fallacies, analyze values on which they are based and clarify and defend their own values and opinions in relation to the television messages.
4. Ability to recognize effects of television viewing.  
A wide range of potential television effects have concerned responsible citizens, including effects on health, leisure time displacement, stereotyping, aggression, etc. By becoming aware of potential effects of television, students can come to recognize the effects of television on them personally and to learn to be on guard against possible negative or dysfunctional effects in their own lives.

To facilitate development of these four critical viewing skills, students need to have an understanding of the following content areas.

#### Economics of television

Television is an industry where every decision is made for financial reasons. The economic structure of the broadcasting industry has an impact on consumers' pocket-books, program quality, viewing alternatives and ability to influence the media. The recognition that commercial television delivers viewers to advertisers rather than programs to viewers should result in a greater ability to question reality and recognize arguments and persuasive techniques.

#### How a television program is produced

People make television programs and every program must evolve from an idea through a script to production and editing. Understanding the decisions made at each point in the process and the constraints affecting these decisions will provide the student with knowledge to assess television's reality as well as to develop standards by which to judge program quality.

### Bases of television regulation

The airwaves belong to the people, and television is an industry regulated by governmental agencies. As television consumers, students need to understand the legal bases for regulation, public service constraints on the industry and the mechanisms by which individuals and groups can actively influence the nature of television programming. The option for exercising those rights is up to individual choice, but knowledge that mechanisms for change do exist is critical to a sense of active control over the influences on one's own life.

### Curriculum Design

The curriculum materials now being developed will include a student guide, a teacher guide and a family guide to encourage both classroom and home learning experiences. The curriculum units, described in the attached course outline, may be offered as a one-semester elective course or incorporated into existing social studies and language arts courses.

The curriculum will stress an experiential activity-oriented approach to learning. Design of curriculum materials is intended to enhance:

1. the development of critical thinking skills in relation to television, i.e. student guide materials will be designed to encourage students to develop their own questions about television, to find ways to locate information to answer these questions, and to assist them in evaluating and drawing conclusions from the information they find,
2. use of primary learning materials to the extent possible, e.g. use of industry and regulatory agency documents, television scripts, etc. as supplementary reading materials,
3. reinforcement of basic classroom skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and
4. progressive skill and knowledge building as the student proceeds through the curriculum sequence.

The curriculum is print-based to encourage widest use; however, audio visual resources and ways to access them will be suggested and their use encouraged.





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## CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS CURRICULUM OUTLINE

### A Course for High School Students

#### UNIT 1, You and Television

This unit introduces students to television as a unique medium with a special role in the lives of many American people. Important to this unit is the students' logging of their own television viewing behavior, with opportunity to compare their viewing to several national averages.

Students will determine their own criteria by which to evaluate viewing patterns, taking into consideration television's characteristics and its influence on American values and life styles. This will serve to introduce students to the themes that will be covered in depth throughout the curriculum.

#### UNIT 2, The Television Industry

Unit 2 maps out the history of television and its organization including the networks, local stations, public television, the Federal Communications Commission, the role of the advertiser, the importance of ratings, and tactics of scheduling. Basic federal regulations regarding television are introduced so that students will comprehend the freedoms and constraints that are imposed on the industry.

Television distribution is examined as a business which, from the start, was automatically considered part of the American free enterprise system. The financing of programs and the relationships between producers, networks, and affiliates are examined. In light of the power and profitability of the medium, the fierce competition for high ratings and control of the airwaves is documented.

The development of television technology is described, showing its emergence as an invention of no parallel, embodying unique processes and effects. Future technologies and the debates regarding their regulation are also discussed.

#### UNIT 3, Programs and Production

This unit enables students to analyze dramatic television programs in much the same way they might approach a novel or short story. Dramatic elements such as plot construction, characterization, dialogue, and pacing are discussed along with the constraints on dramatic form imposed by the nature of the television medium.

Following this analysis, the unit next considers how the elements of television production influence the nature of the programs on the air. Content covered includes television production choices (video vs. film, types of camera shots and lighting, music track, etc.), economic constraints on production, types of persons employed, and the teamwork required to put a program together to get it on the air. The outcome of this part should be a greater understanding that all TV programs are deliberately "staged" (and therefore "unreal") for technological and economic reasons. Students will also develop an appreciation of the singular aesthetic principles of television.

#### UNIT 4, Selling

Selling, or advocacy programming, includes any television messages intended to persuade, such as commercials and political advertising. In Unit 4, students will learn to identify persuasive arguments and develop ways to counterargue. They will also be introduced to the impact of television on politics including voting behavior, political advertising, "image" politics, and ways in which political campaigns have changed.

In addition, this unit covers topics such as market research, the use of stereotypes in commercials, subliminal messages used to attract buyers, the size of advertising budgets, and the restrictions imposed by the Federal Trade Commission. The biases of advertising are discussed to point out that specific production techniques are chosen to suit specific goals and needs.

#### UNIT 5, That's The Way It Is?

Unit 5 focuses on news and informational programming; their production techniques, their power to influence opinion, and the legal and social responsibilities of their creators.

The constraints on television coverage of the news are examined including time limitations, technological shortcomings, and news policies imposed by the networks.

The power of news programming is also discussed. Editorial decisions such as choice of stories, their order of presentation, the length of time devoted to them, and the selection of accompanying images all serve to influence the implicit messages of newscasts and make objective reporting a difficult and often impossible task. Elements of television news are contrasted with print news, and varieties of documentary programming are described.

Students will learn about the Fairness Doctrine and discuss the First Amendment rights of broadcasters. Interviews with newscasters are included covering a wide range of controversial issues.

#### UNIT 6, The Television Environment

This unit has a dual focus: the nature of television content, and studies that have shown the effects of that content on viewers.

In the first part, students consider how television images compare to the real world. Portrayals of women, minorities, different age groups, and acts of violence are shown to be different from their real world counterparts. Attention is given to stereotypes and to the social and personal values of the TV environment: that violence resolves conflict, that good always subdues evil, that youth and beauty are the pathways to happiness and success, to name a few.

In the second part, research is cited suggesting that heavy television viewing has a significant effect on how people regard the real world. In confronting this issue, students will conduct their own research and evaluate a question that is pivotal to this curriculum: to what degree should television reflect life's realities?

#### UNIT 7, A Saving Radiance?

This unit is a re-cap of the entire curriculum and gives students the opportunity to reinforce and review the skills developed. It also presents a summary of new television technologies which are destined (by the mid-1980's) to erode the centralized programming power of the three commercial networks. While studying these new developments, students will address the issue of regulating television in the lives of their children in years to come.



## RESOURCE LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS

Action for Children's Television, Inc.  
46 Austin Street  
Newlonville, MA 02160

CBS Television Reading Program  
CBS Entertainment Division  
51 West 52nd Street  
New York, NY 10019

Center for Science in the Public Interest  
1770 Church St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Council on Children, Media & Merchandising  
1346 Connecticut Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Ethel Daccardo  
3245 Wisconsin Avenue  
Berwyn, IL 60402

Federal Communications Commission  
Public Information Office  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

National Assn. for Better Broadcasting  
P.O. Box 43640  
Los Angeles, CA 90043

National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting  
1028 Connecticut Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Correspondence Group  
P.O. Box 1039  
Palo Alto, CA 94302

National PTA TV Action Center  
700 North Rush Street  
Chicago, IL 60611

Office of Communication  
United Church of Christ  
289 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10010

Prime Time School Television  
120 South LaSalle, Room 810  
Chicago, IL 60603

Teachers' Guides to Television  
Teachers' Guides Company  
699 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10021

### List of publications

Scripts and teachers guides to  
selected CBS TV programs, contact  
local CBS affiliate

Publishes information offering  
alternatives to the junk food  
advertised on television

Consumer interests of children

Booklet: *National Television  
Advertisers* \$1.50

Quarterly newsletter: *Better  
Radio and Television* \$3/year

Violence levels in TV programs.  
*Target List* \$2, list of  
commercial sponsors

Monitoring of TV programs,  
citizen action

List of publications  
Offer consultation & legal  
assistance to improve programming.

Teacher guides to Prime Time TV  
Programs; published monthly

Teacher Guide to prime time programs;  
Parent Participation Workshop

## Reading TV: Today's Basic



Don W. Brown

---

*Television, with its undeniable impact, is here to stay. Educators should learn to use the medium to their advantage instead of constantly decrying its content.*

---

Literacy that is limited to print reading is inadequate for today's world of basics. Although printed materials will not lose their prominent position in education, we must deal with the realities of present TV. Easy access to the printed page, which occurred following the introduction of the printing press, parallels today's TV, with its convenient and intimate access to 204 million Americans in 73 million households. As reading print is basic for successfully comprehending the printed page, so reading TV is a true basic for successfully utilizing the visual moving page of this medium.

Television today shapes human dreams and future life styles even more precisely for the masses than yesterday's fine written literature did for the affluent, educated few. We must develop a combined television literacy that makes

the most of the components of effective listening, seeing/observing, and reading. No other mode of communication can approach the present capacity of television to transmit—through colorful visual imagery—the precise, the logical, and sometimes the quite profound. When we combine appropriate sound to expressive visual messages, together with other supportive elements, we seem to have the best of all possible present communication worlds. A true distinction between viewing TV and reading TV can be made. TV must be *read* and not just viewed. Viewing and reading are two different activities for the individual. Viewing takes a lower level of hearing and looking performance. Hearing is a modest level exercise that requires little or no conscious individual effort. We all hear sound input, but few of us regularly listen with studied attention and true

discrimination. Listening is a much higher and more sophisticated operation involving conscious, organized discrimination of sound-produced information. Looking, in contrast to seeing, is another comparatively limited activity. We perform this function from infancy. Seeing is a more intricate experience. It requires a meaningful structuring of the comprehensive visual incoming stimuli. Both listening and seeing are appropriate for our modern-day communication and TV reading.

Viewing TV suggests a casual, recreational, and relatively passive low-level relationship with the medium and its product. We use television as a diversion, a time-filler, and as an inexpensive entertainment option. Programs are designed with these primary goals in mind. Viewing is passive; reading TV is active. Reading television demands a studied, calculated, integrated activity of the highest intellectual order. It requires content worthy of the important time invested by audiences.

Like it or not, television has become the only real and used reading-related form of communication of daily significance for wide segments of today's viewing public. With program platters, laser transmissions, two-way video, and more advanced and complex satellites, it doesn't take a prophet to predict the future unless something dramatically and systematically designed is undertaken by authorities and leaders in TV and educational fields. Why is it that small children know Big Bird before their own grandmothers? Why is it that they can recite and sing various soft drink jingles before they have learned the simplest nursery rhymes? Why do their older brothers and sisters go around imitating the Fonzie in gesture and word? Daily exposure to TV rather than people has made Sesame Street's Big Bird their grandmothers and Coke jingles their nursery rhymes.

We talk around the hard core problem rather than to it. We treat TV as if it were a socially tolerable disease and our own modest patent brand of medicine remedy will cure or control it. We act as if it were a problem like cigarettes and smoking. Remedies like "cold turkey" are freely offered. We provide half clues with "smoke and lung" arguments suggesting the creation of mindless children, passive, dependent, and nonthink-

ing. We give out with "tar" statistics and warning labels on what we believe to be the debilitating effect of its uncontrolled use. We educators bemoan the condition that we don't get the cooperation of the TV industry, and we ourselves can't get a handle on it because its primary use lies outside the school domain. So we seem stuck with the button "on."

The impact of television is undeniable. The kind of influence and the permanent long range effects have yet to be determined. We do know what has occurred in comparable situations where there has been a gigantic intrusion on American life styles and everyday family activities.

Consider the automobile. As a nation we became dependent on it. We panicked when a threat to its use was raised with the suggestion of an oil shortage. We were paralyzed. The auto was allowed to grow without restraint or responsibility. Industry, education, and the general public ignored the warning signs. The modern way of mobile life brought along with it serious accidents, pollution, sprawling highways, and a multitude of vehicle-oriented laws, regulations, and new demanding industries. Only after dangerous and continuing failures to use the car properly did it even get the smallest bit of educational attention. It was not much. In fact about all the tangibles that easily came to the surface were driver education programs in the public schools and a few vocational/technical courses in other schools. Just as Ford and others are recalling models that function improperly and dangerously, the schools and the public are beginning to suggest a recall of students who fail to meet standards of performance equal to the needs of modern day living. A new literacy is required. A major portion of it is centered in and around TV and its use in American life.

#### TV Moderation

We need to turn from some of our enjoyable agonizing and seek more productively oriented solutions. These solutions cannot be as easy as "Turn the TV button to off." As H. L. Mencken so aptly put his 50-year-old axiom, "For every problem there is a solution, neat, simple—and wrong."

We need to sift the little grains of truth



about TV from all the chaff surrounding it and proceed with unified dispatch. Of course better TV materials need to be created. The need for better print materials has been the cry for some period of time. Let that not deter anyone. The comfortable inaction scapegoat has disappeared. And even if it were all the bad things we might feel or claim, it still wouldn't help. TV exists. TV will be used. The only present question of relevance is *How?*

There are a few obvious means of moderating the negative effect and stressing the positive in TV fare today. Intelligent parents who take themselves and their children to the library to choose appropriate reading materials can also be expected to utilize similar care in what they see at movies and on TV. As family units and individuals along with industry moderate television use, educators can begin to accelerate the productive features of current TV options. They can then stimulate or create better programs and more competent skills for TV reading achievement.

The television industry is showing some awareness and awakening responsibility to its obligations. Most everyone was impressed when it was discovered that 109 million persons watched *Holocaust*. Few would quarrel with the value of productions such as *Civilization*, *The Adams Chronicles*, and *The Ascent of Man*.

These offerings had high visibility and were popular sellers for commercial TV. Samples such as these have been too few for an industry as large and as powerful as commercial TV. The common complaint of overstressed sex, violence, and other equally disputable content is well documented. Continuing accelerated use of the human viewing resources could conceivably destroy its own commercial end and market in an ever increasing, escalated and competitive drawing of its viewers to products and aspirations that are unattainable. TV leaders must be encouraged to moderate use of the viewing audience resource in the same way we expect wise utilization of other treasured energy resources in today's shrinking world.

### TV Reading Primer

What about the role of the teacher/educator? A TV reading primer could be helpful, but there

are a few initial starting points of promise that already exist. First, the audience is using TV actively. The depth of the TV experience may be on the level of paperback Western reading for escape, but it does exist. Some of this is equally permissible in television fare. Common sense, moderation, perspective, and some professional guidance are all needed. Only watching game shows or soaps daily requires some sensible modification in TV reading habits and content. Just as a balanced diet is appropriate with food intake, so it is with TV consumption. The schools have not been timid about getting actively engaged in all sorts of guiding and instructing in areas of health and good nutrition. It's about time to get into the "TV act."

Unguided, unstructured use of TV results in a confusing combination of complex circumstances and unresolved consequences. When more than 100,000 viewers write letters to a fictional doctor on TV for answers to real medical problems, that should be something of a signal for physicians to examine and answer what appears to be a serious need of some kind. Educators must help their sister profession in a joint endeavor. It is fairly easy to recognize that the "warm" Dr. Welby would appear more accessible and trustworthy than possibly the busy, harried practitioner in the local examining room.

Other viewers seem to have difficulty in separating the reality and fiction of the vivid portrayals. When legal questions bombard lawyer/court and law-oriented programs, that should be somewhat less than a subtle signal to the legal profession to activate themselves in a mature response with educators. Once again it is fairly easy to recognize some of the surface responding to humane and responsive big brother and fatherly character portrayals. Education, medicine, and law all must examine and seek solutions of mutual concern and in the public interest.

When educators discover the vocabularies, the mannerisms, the behaviors, the conversations, and the attitudes of their students resembling popular TV characters, it is more than a signal for unified action on the part of the professions, the TV industry, and the general public.

Certain survival type skills can be offered as a start for teachers so that they can make some constructive use of TV in the classroom now,

First aid helps currently appear in professional journals and publications with quick guides and suggested activities. Most are at a common and often even shallow level. Some teachers do consistently alert themselves to TV fare that relates to obvious portions of their subject area or level and unit of study. A few are experimenting with TV scripts to encourage improvement of basic skills, language development, and traditional reading. All of these are inadequate to the task that faces the learner.

A most observable first opportunity of experience in the public schools can occur in kindergarten as children formally enter the educational process. Even though children arrive with all kinds of experience in both reading print materials and TV, special readiness activities are needed. This similar readiness prerequisite in TV reading must be a foundation for all other and advanced levels of television reading.

Guided reading lessons in other grades of elementary school serve as a kind of model or sample for guided TV reading activities both in and out of school. Children are prepared for the story they will read. Background is built for understanding the special nature surrounding the reading event. Concepts, vocabulary, and other particular skills needed to participate are stressed. The pupils read the print material; the pupils read TV material as well. The teacher monitors and supervises.

With the current advanced technology, group TV reading can be employed. TV tapes and similar materials can be momentarily stopped after a few moments as easily as after a traditional paragraph of reading in a book. They can be re-

played, discussed, questions asked and responded to, and otherwise instructionally directed under the control of the professional teacher.

In the secondary school, teachers who regularly assign good literature, good scientifically-based readings, and written recommendations pertinent to particular fields of endeavor, could assign and recommend appropriate TV reading in their everyday learning lessons. With the active support of the resources of the academic disciplines and their counterparts in business and other public domain pursuits, great progress can be anticipated in a wide range of areas related to adolescent needs and interests.

There have always been those who will decry the threat of the TV resource just as there are those who still complain about things like the computer component of our everyday lives. The old computer slogan "GI-GO" seems appropriate. "Garbage In, Garbage Out." So far as the educational field is concerned, little has been put in. Until we put something of substance in TV we cannot expect substance in return. A giant resource stands before us to be channeled for the mutual benefit and well being of all. Educators should and must lead the way. 



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#### Future ASCD Annual Conferences

|      |                  |           |                               |
|------|------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| 1979 | March 3-7        | Detroit   | Cobo Hall                     |
| 1980 | March 29-April 2 | Atlanta   | Georgia World Congress Center |
| 1981 | March 7-11       | St. Louis | Congress Center               |
| 1982 | March 20-24      | Anaheim   | Convention Center             |



Photo: CBS.

## The Societal Curriculum and the School Curriculum: Allies or Antagonists?

Carlos E. Cortés

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*Students learn from many sources. Educators need to become aware of what is being taught by television and other societal "teachers."*

---

Schools are not education. They are only part of education. When curriculum is mentioned, most people think of the *school curriculum*, whether manifest or hidden. In reality, however, two curriculums operate side by side. In addition to the education we receive in school all of us receive a lifelong education through the *societal curriculum*.

What is the societal curriculum?<sup>1</sup> It is that massive, ongoing, informal curriculum of family, peer groups, neighborhoods, mass media, and other

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<sup>1</sup>I introduced this concept in: Carlos E. Cortés, Fay Metcalf, and Sharryl Hawke. *Understanding You and Them: Tips for Teaching about Ethnicity*. Boulder, Colorado: Social Science Education Consortium, 1976. p. 2.



socializing forces that "educate" us throughout our lives. For example, as one important component of the societal curriculum, television has been receiving increasing scholarly attention.<sup>2</sup> One study reported that young people age 12 to 18 spend one-fifth of their waking hours in front of the television set.<sup>3</sup> According to another estimate, by the time of graduation, the average high school senior will have spent 12,000 hours in the classroom and 15,000 hours in front of the television set. In other words, in terms of direct contact hours, teachers may be 20 percent behind the tube—and television is only one aspect of the societal curriculum.

What about the impact of the societal curriculum? In 1975, social psychologist George Comstock reported that there had been more than 2,300 research papers on television and human behavior. According to Comstock:

Several writers have argued that television is a powerful reinforcer of the *status quo*. The ostensible mechanisms are the effects of its portrayals on public

expectations and perceptions. Television portrayals and particularly violent drama are said to assign roles of authority, power, success, failure, dependence, and vulnerability in a manner that matches the real-life social hierarchy, thereby strengthening that hierarchy by increasing its acknowledgement among the public and by failing to provide positive images for members of social categories occupying a subservient position. Content analyses of television drama support the contention that portrayals reflect normative status.<sup>4</sup>

One of my research interests is the societal curriculum on ethnicity and culture. What is being "taught" about culture and ethnicity in the societal curriculum? What is that curriculum's impact on what people "know" about ethnicity and ethnic groups? How does the multicultural societal curriculum affect beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and behavior related to ethnic groups? How does it support or limit the effectiveness of school multicultural education? What are the implications for schools, including school curriculum development?

Studies have shown that many children develop well-formed attitudes about members of ethnic groups, including prejudices and stereotypes, by the time they reach school.<sup>5</sup> In this respect, the media have a particularly powerful impact, often outweighing personal experience. In one study, white children said TV comedies like *Sanford and Son* and *The Jeffersons* accurately portrayed black family life, even when they admitted that such shows contrasted with personal experiences with their own black friends. They thought their friends were exceptions!<sup>7</sup>

Moving to a global context, a survey of

Photo: CBS.



<sup>2</sup> For example, see: Robert Singer and Robert Kazdon, editors, "Television and Social Behavior," *Journal of Social Issues* 32; Fall 1976.

<sup>3</sup> A. M. Rubin, "Television in Children's Political Socialization," *Journal of Broadcasting* 20:51-59; Winter 1976.

<sup>4</sup> George Comstock, *The Impact of Television on American Institutions and the American Public*. Honolulu: East-West Communication Institute, East-West Center, 1977. pp. 20-21.

<sup>5</sup> For various filmic perspectives on this topic, see: Randall M. Miller, editor, *Ethnic Images in American Film and Television*. Philadelphia: The Balch Institute, 1978.

<sup>6</sup> For example, see: Mary Ellen Goodman, *Race Awareness in Young Children*, second edition. New York: Macmillan, 1964.

<sup>7</sup> Bradley S. Greenberg, "Children's Reactions to TV Blacks," *Journalism Quarterly* 49:5-14; Spring 1972.

fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders found that television had the greatest impact on their attitudes toward foreign nations and peoples. In a recent social studies assessment conducted by the California State Department of Education, seventh-grade students in 65 California public schools were asked to select one of four answers to, "Which of the following is an example of an ethnic group in the United States?" Fourteen percent selected "The United Auto Workers," 24 percent each answered "All the people who live in the same town" and "The Chinese," and 34 percent answered "People on welfare!" The societal curriculum had done its job.

### For Better or for Worse

Whatever the subject matter or theme, the societal curriculum probably has both positive and negative educational effects. For example, the showing of *Roots* was probably a major contribution to general understanding of the black experience. In contrast, other aspects of the multicultural societal curriculum, whether intentionally or unintentionally, have had such negative effects as heightening prejudice or reinforcing stereotypes. Indicative of the media's negative educational potential was NBC's repeated cautioning of the audience during its fall 1977 showing of *The Godfather Saga* that:

"The Godfather" is a fictional account of the activities of a small group of ruthless criminals. The characters do not represent any ethnic group and it would be erroneous and unfair to suggest that they do.

This gratuitous and totally ineffective posturing probably did little to soften the film's effect on perceptions about Italian Americans. However, it dramatized an awareness of the power of the multicultural societal curriculum.

While my discussion has focused on multicultural education, obviously the societal curriculum educates continuously about almost every subject—although we cannot be sure what each person "learns" from that curriculum. Citizenship, career, law-related, medical, environmental, global, consumer education—these are only examples of the various societal curriculums. What, then, are the implications for school educators? Should we view the societal curriculum as an



Photo: ABC.

antagonist? Should we unite with it as an ally? I would say both. The worst thing we can do is ignore it.

### Recommendations

I would like to make four recommendations related to the societal curriculum. First, an examination of the societal curriculum should be an integral part of both teacher education and inservice training. Second, teachers should constantly consider the societal curriculum in the planning and implementation of school curriculum. Third, teachers should use the societal curriculum as classroom material. Fourth, schools should help students become "literate" in the societal curriculum.



Photo: ABC.

1. *The societal curriculum as an element of teacher education*—Whenever I present inservice courses on multicultural education, I ask teachers to keep a “societal curriculum journal” on culture and ethnicity—a record of the education on ethnicity they observe outside of school being given by such “teachers” as conversations with family and friends, newspapers, television, motion pictures, advertisements, and even bumper stickers. Even the most aware teachers express surprise about the amount of multicultural education going on in the societal curriculum. This awareness training helps teachers develop an understanding of the societal influences on their own and their students’ beliefs and attitudes about ethnicity and ethnic groups.

Clearly, the study of the societal curriculum is equally applicable to most other subjects. For

example, I have used a similar approach in workshops on global education and law-related education. There I address such questions as what does the societal curriculum “teach” about different nations or the function of law-related institutions. In short, the societal curriculum can be an integral part of all teacher education.

2. *The societal curriculum as an aid to curriculum planning and implementation*—To teach without considering the implications of the societal curriculum is to operate in a land of make believe. Students learn from the societal curriculum (although we can never be sure what each one has learned about each subject), and that learning affects their formal education. The skilled teacher can and should build from that societal learning.

For example, when I introduce the study of an ethnic group, I first explore with students what they already “know” about that group as well as how they “learned” it. A teacher in one of my courses, when beginning an elementary-school unit on gypsies in a city with a sizable gypsy community, found that her students had deeply-rooted preconceptions. When the teacher asked where they had learned so much about gypsies, they responded with answers ranging from “my folks” to “Wolfman movies.” Bizarre? Then consider a high school teacher in Massachusetts who was presenting a unit on the Holocaust. When exploring her students’ previous knowledge on the subject, she discovered, “Their only encounter with Nazis, it seemed, was while watching *Hogan’s Heroes* on television.”<sup>8</sup> Through the classroom examination of student societal learning, whatever the topic, the skilled teacher can both increase student awareness and build curriculum in relation to existing student perceptions.

3. *The societal curriculum as classroom material*—Feature films, commercial television, newspapers, magazines, and advertising can be a stimulating and significant part of the school curriculum. So what’s new? Haven’t teachers been using films, for example, for decades? True, but how and how well? Sometimes quite well, but too often simply as surrogate teachers, as substitutes for the written word, or as spoken text-

<sup>8</sup> Roselle Chartock. “A Holocaust Unit for Classroom Teachers.” *Social Education* 42:278-85; April 1978.



books from which students are asked to memorize uncritically and recall factually. Visual media, in particular, should not be used simply as textbooks to learn from. Rather, in the classroom they should be examined critically, including their significance as a reflection of society.

Pioneering work in this area has been done by organizations such as Prime Time School Television. In its course, "Television, Police, and the Law," students analyze law-related television series for their depiction of the activities of law enforcement agencies and compare these depictions with legal guidelines for such agencies.<sup>9</sup> In our film-and-history courses at the University of California, Riverside, Leon Campbell and I adopt a multiple perspective strategy.<sup>10</sup> We select specific themes—economic dislocation and human migration, the conflict between law and justice, the significance of the frontier—and show several films that present alternative and sometimes conflicting perspectives on those themes. We then ask students to identify the filmmakers' perspectives, to analyze their techniques for influencing the viewer, and to compare these perspectives with those of the assigned written material. The societal curriculum should be used in the classroom, then, to increase critical awareness and analytical ability.

4. *The societal curriculum as part of student "literacy"*—Schools should help students become "literate" in the societal curriculum. A major goal of schools is to prepare young people for the future. That future will be in a world of media, particularly the visual media. One recent survey indicated that 65 percent of college graduates considered television, not newspapers or magazines, as their major source of news. Therefore, while helping students develop their capacity for literacy in the written language, we should simultaneously be striving to strengthen their "media literacy."<sup>11</sup>

Long after students leave school, they will continue to learn from the societal curriculum. How well are schools preparing students to deal with that curriculum—to be aware of it, to comprehend it, to analyze it, and to resist its more noxious effects? We can make the societal curriculum our educational ally. By ignoring it, we can guarantee that it will in many respects be our

educational antagonist. By helping students to develop societal curriculum literacy, we will be contributing to their becoming more aware, sensitive, and effective citizens of the future.

<sup>9</sup> Prime Time School Television. *Television, Police, and the Law*. Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1977.

<sup>10</sup> Carlos E. Cortés, Leon G. Campbell, and Alan Curl. *A Filmic Approach to the Study of Historical Dilemmas*. Riverside, California: Latin American Studies Program, University of California, 1976.

<sup>11</sup> See: Carlos E. Cortés and Leon G. Campbell. "Forward to Basics: Teaching Media Literacy Through the Social Studies." *The Link* 1:1-3; November 1977.

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Carlos E. Cortés is Professor of History and Chair, Chicano Studies, University of California, Riverside.

# Education

## Learning to Live with TV

*Or, if you can't beat 'em, at least try to join 'em*

*I believe television is going to be the test of the modern world, and that in this new opportunity to see beyond the range of our vision we shall discover either a new and unbearable disturbance of the general peace or a saving radiance in the sky.*

—E.B. White, 1938

At least as measured by its range, today TV is certainly of age. It captivates an audience that runs to a nightly third of all the men, women and children in America. Images flow out over the population to be absorbed, statisticians insist, at the appalling average rate of 29 hours per week per citizen. The cash flows in. A minute of network prime-time advertising can sell for up to \$140,000, or enough to pay the salary of seven or eight high school English teachers for a whole year.

But there is not much saving radiance in the sky. Instead, the air is alive with the sound of lamentation. At various times from various quarters, TV has been accused of raising the crime rate, dropping students' test scores, crippling the imagination, undermining national literacy, and layering American homes with an attention-numbing narcotic. The charges go way back. They were first raised by long-suffering parents and teachers who simply watched the TV viewing of children under their care and came to what they felt were grim, self-evident conclusions. Then the argument shifted a bit to the amount of violence on TV and its cumulative effects on society. To both counts the TV networks reacted as they still do: Life is complex. There is no proof. It's a free country, and people get what they want, as the networks' brutal rating games demonstrate. Besides, haven't those worrywarts heard of such a thing as healthy dramatic catharsis?

When the issue comes to public conflict it is customarily fought out in the wrong terms: an attempt to link one specific act of real-life violence to one specific act of TV violence. About the best documented instance, from the viewpoint of anti-TV forces, occurred in 1966 when NBC screened *Doomsday Flight*, ignoring pleas by airline pilots not to do so. A made-for-TV special, it presented a fictional extortion attempt by bomb threat against an airliner in flight. After the show the Federal Aviation Agency recorded a dramatic increase in phone-in

bomb threats to airlines. More horrifying was the lawsuit against the same network by a mother who asked for \$11 million after her nine-year-old daughter was gang-raped with a beer bottle by three teen-age girls and a boy. The assailants had seen a similar rape of a girl by girls on a TV movie only a few days earlier.



Peter Falk performing in *Columbo*



Subject wired up with electrodes for a TV-watching experiment



Savvas as Kojak; Carter as Wonder Woman

*A training course in the art of inattention?*

though the instrument was the handle of a plumber's helper.

The First Amendment, as interpreted at the time, protects TV networks from responsibility unless intentional "incitement" to a specific act is involved, so the case was thrown out of court. And the argument goes on. Psychological and medical research teams have joined parents

and educators in studying the problem, much of their work financed by organizations publicly concerned about the damage TV may be doing. Among the latter: the National Institute of Mental Health, the House Subcommittee on Communications. Even the American Medical Association, not noticeably alarmist, announced a series of research projects and dedicated itself to a long-term effort to reduce the amount of violence on TV.

Violence on TV, despite protests, does not seem to be declining. Last month Professors George Gerbner and Larry Gross of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications came out with their tenth annual *Violence Profile*. On the basis of a prime-time and a weekend sampling, they report that crooks still make up 17% of all television characters (vs. 1% or less in real life), and that 65% of them are involved in violence. The damage, Gross argues, does not lie in rare incitements to acts of violence, but in the attitudes and views of the world engendered by what they call "heavy" TV watching. In-depth testing of a sample of 600 proved heavy viewers are more fearful, anxious and suspicious of the world than "light" viewers. Significantly more of them replied "almost always" when asked, "How often is it all right to hit someone if you're mad at them?" As to reading, Gross says, "except occasionally for the lowest IQ group who do a little better if they watch TV—because they see some printed words at least—for most children the more television the worse they do in school."

Other studies seem to support Gross's finding. Leonard Eron, a professor of psychology at the University of Illinois, conducted a ten-year investigation, ending in 1970, on 875 third-grade children in a semirural part of New York State. Eron started with the conviction that the impact of television on people was no greater than that of movies, fairy tales or comic strips. He now believes that a "direct, positive relation" exists between TV viewing by small boys and aggressive behavior. Little girls, significantly, did not show any increase in such aggressive behavior. But a new project Eron has since begun indicates that they do now. His explanation: today TV has more violent female role models—including those in *Wonder Woman* and *Charlie's Angels*—than it had before.

Another study linking TV watching with aggression was funded by CBS. In 1972 the network commissioned William Belson, a sociologist at the London School of Economics' Survey Research Center, to run a six-year, \$290,000 study of 1,565

## Education

London teen-age boys. Belson's conclusion: long exposure to television noticeably increased the degree to which they engaged in serious acts of violence (smashing cars and phone booths, setting shopping bags on fire).

CBS dismissed Belson's finding as adding "nothing of consequence" to the continuing debate on the issue. In response to Federal Trade Commission pressure and nationwide lobbying by groups like Action for Children's Television (ACT), the networks have launched a series of special dramas for children and reduced the number of week-end ads by more than 40%. (Yachtman and Atlanta Braves Owner Ted Turner has offered to subsidize Saturday children's programs on his own cable station, WTGO: they would run with no ads at all.)

**A**n increasing number of studies suggest that the main danger of television may not be the message, but the medium itself, just looking at TV. In Bedford, Mass., Psychophysicist Thomas Mulholland and Peter Crown, a professor of television and psychology at Hampshire College, have attached electrodes to the heads of children and adults as they watched TV. Mulholland thought that kids watching exciting shows would show high attention. To his surprise, the reverse proved true. While viewing TV, the subjects' output of alpha waves increased, indicating they were in a passive state, as if they were "just sitting quietly in the dark." The implication: TV may be a training course in the art of inattention.

Professors Jerome and Dorothy Singer, who head Yale University's Family Television Research Center, have been studying groups of several hundred three- and four-year-olds as they watch TV at home and in nursery school. They feel that heavy TV viewing stunts the growth of the imagination in the crucial ages between three and five. Such children make up fewer games and imaginary playmates.

In education, at least, some useful efforts are being made to live with the electronic menace, and even turn its endless noise, repetition, violence, materialism and banality to some advantage. All last year in Lansing, Mich., for example, High School Senior Eric Pretzlaff has been filling out his home "viewing log." His assignment is to take notes on the prime-time shows he sees with a view to improving his understanding of economics. After watching CBS's *Alice*, he noted that Alice's high standard of living is not consistent with her job as a waitress in a small restaurant. In Eric's class, Economics Teacher Rudy Johnson asks, "How much job security does a small restaurant owner like Mel (Alice's boss) have?" And a student responds, "Not much, because small places like that



Alice (left) and friends with her boss

go broke a lot." Smoothly, Johnson moves the discussion to the subject of extra risks that face small businesses throughout the business cycle.

Johnson's educational use of TV is based on something called Prime Time School Television (PTST), a Chicago-based, nonprofit organization that prepares TV-related study guides. And PTST illustrates the general principle of prime-time teaching: use the screen to get students' attention, then engage their intelligence with questions, study guides and sometimes scripts read as homework. Thereafter, Archie Bunker's layoff from his job on the loading dock can be used to prompt a class discussion of unemployment. An arrest by Starsky and Hutch helps illustrate constitutional guarantees like that of a suspect's right to counsel. The approach is being applied by different companies in slightly different ways. The CBS Television Reading Program helps student TV watchers to sharpen their logic and their language skills by providing "enrichment guides" (script and discussion questions) for special shows. It is now used by more than 4 million students. The New York-based publisher of a booklet series, *Teachers Guides to Television*, does not offer scripts

but presents detailed assignments. (For *Battlestar Galactica* suggested reading is Jules Verne, and studying the astronomy of Ptolemy and Kepler.) The same company also prepares outlines for parent-child discussions of TV shows. "A fictional story offers a family the chance to discuss matters that are otherwise difficult to bring up," observes *Guides* Editor Gloria Kirshner.

PTST, which distributes 200,000 monthly study guides to such serious TV productions as *Eleanor and Franklin*, *Masterpiece Theater* and *Between the Wars*, set out two years ago to transmute even the most mindless network shows into learning aids. The first piece of alchemy was making cops-and-robbers shows the cornerstone of a curriculum package. *Columbo* episodes serve as lessons on literary elements: dramatic character, plot development, conflict and resolution. Students taking law and criminal-justice courses use a "constitutional-awareness chart" to determine whether Baretta has illegally roughed up a suspect. Armed with their study guides, students quickly become sensitive to the way television can distort reality. "All big-city cops are not as glamorous as Kojak," says Lori Kaufman, 14, of Lucas, Kans.

**P**roponents of prime-time teaching say familiar television examples make schoolwork less imposing and more interesting. "Reading becomes exciting," asserts Melinda Douglas, assistant to the general manager at KNXT-TV, CBS's Los Angeles affiliate, "because students can imagine those words being spoken by an actor or actress on television." Opponents point out that the minimal degree of reading skill and concentration required by TV teaching is not adequate training for serious study of literature or history, or for the effort necessary to master subjects that cannot be easily popularized, like math and chemistry. They also fear that television teaching may stimulate excessive viewing among a generation that watches too much TV as it is. The prospect of ten-year-old tube junkies using *TV Guide* as a syllabus is unsettling to parents who believe that serious learning comes from books. Teachers who have used one form or another of prime-time education, however, regard TV not as a "vast wasteland," in the memorable epithet of former Federal Communications Commissioner Newton Minow, but as a vast resource waiting to be tapped. One TV watcher who agrees is Minow himself, who now sits on the PTST board. Says he: "The most important educational institution in the country is not Harvard or Yale or Caltech—it's television." For better or for worse, it is difficult not to agree with him.



Student Eric Pretzlaff doing economics homework

Job security and the small restaurant business? 279



# The Classroom's Ubiquitous Rival:

By Clifton Fadiman

We Americans have constructed, in less than 200 years, the most magnificent democratic educational system in history. Today we find that entire system cracking, and some parts of it falling to pieces. We all know the reasons usually given, and all of them contribute to our trouble. Yet one has the uneasy feeling that they have all appeared in our time as a consequence of some deeper shift in our national psyche.

I am talking about the "alternate life."

The alternate life is the consequence of the communications revolution of the last 30 years or so. There is another, highly competitive educational system, opposed in almost every essential way to traditional schooling, that operates on the child and youth from the age of 2. It takes up as much of his time as the school does, and it works on him with far greater effectiveness.

That system is the linked structure of which television is the heart and which numbers among its constituents film, radio, comic books, pop music, sports — and the life styles (including the drug culture, permissive sex, and systematized antisocial conduct) which this structure either automatically or deliberately produces.

This alternative life is a life; it is not a diversion, a hobby, an amusement. It offers its own disciplines, its own curriculum, its own ethical and cultural values, its own style and language. It works on children and youths every day, year after year, teaching them, forming them, conditioning them. And it is profoundly opposed to traditional education. There is no way of reconciling the values of literature or science with the values of the TV commercial. There is no way of reconciling the vision offered by Shakespeare or Newton with the vision of life offered by the "Gong Show." Two systems of thought and feeling stand opposed to each other.

This has never before been the case. The idea of education was never be-



Amy Brown

fore opposed by a competitor. It was taken for granted because no alternative appeared on the horizon. But today there is a complete alternative life to which children submit themselves. This alternative life offers them heroes, slogans, images, forms of conduct, and content of a sort — and all run counter to the message given in the classroom.

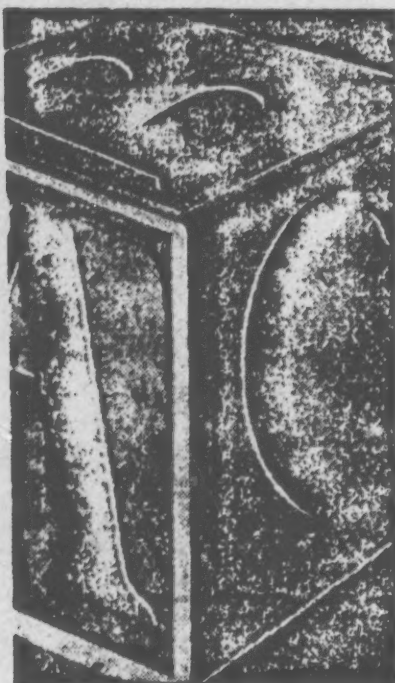
For the first time in history, the child is required to be a citizen of two cultures: the tradition and the alternate life. Is it any wonder that such a division of loyalties should result in the chaos we observe? In a deep sense, all our children (and, to a degree, our teachers, our parents, and ourselves) are schizophrenics. On the one hand is the reality-system expounded in a book, the idea, the cultural past; on

the other hand is the far more vivid and comprehensible reality-system expounded by television, the rock star, the religion of instantaneous sensation, gratification and consumption.

We are passing into a new consciousness-phase, as radical as that which man had to pass through when he relinquished his hunting-and-gathering culture and adopted the Neolithic way of life. Our children are not worse or better than we are; they are different. Their heads are filled with images and ideas (for TV has its own world of ideas) that simply make it hard for them to accept the notion that reading, writing and arithmetic are legitimate. Of course, they still obey the authority of the educational system. But they have no inner commitment to it.

Good teachers, when you question

## Pop Culture



them inexorably, almost always finally admit that their difficulties stem from the competition of the alternate life. And this competition they are not trained to meet. The alternate life has one special psychological effect that handicaps the teacher — any teacher, whether of writing or any other basic subject. That effect is a decline in the faculty of attention, and therefore a decline in the capacity to learn — not the innate capacity, but the capacity as it is conditioned by the media.

The great attraction of the media is that they do the mental work for you, skillfully and systematically; that when they do exact attention, it is only for brief periods of time; that these periods are punctuated by commercials that are intended to switch the attention from one area (the program) to another (the consumption stimulus).

This conception of the alternate life is probably debatable, and it certainly will not be accepted by everyone. Its claim to the interest of others, if not their agreement, lies in the fact that it goes beyond the present educational system and tries to locate the ultimate source of our troubles in the changes now agitating our entire Western cul-

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CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS  
Workshop Evaluation

1. How would you rate the overall quality of the workshop you attended today?  
☐ Excellent    ☐ Good    ☐ Fair    ☐ Poor
2. Did the workshop presentations give you a clear idea of what critical television viewing skills are?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
3. Did the workshop presentations give you a clear idea of the importance of teaching critical television viewing skills in the high school curriculum?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
4. Did the workshop presentations provide ideas to you on how to incorporate critical television viewing skills into your classroom?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
5. Did the workshop presentations give you enough information about the Critical Television Viewing Skills curriculum for high school students?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
6. Did you enjoy the workshop?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
7. What was the best part of the workshop for you? the least interesting?  
Best:  
  
Least interesting:
8. Did you have sufficient opportunity to share your ideas with others?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
9. Did you have sufficient opportunity to ask questions?  
☐ Yes    ☐ No
10. Do you have any suggestions about how to improve the workshops to make them more on-target for high school teachers?

## SLIDE PRESENTATION

### VISUAL

### AUDIO

#### 1. FWL Logo

Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ from Far West Laboratory in San Francisco. I'm here today to tell you about

#### 2. Critical TV Viewing Skills Curriculum graphic

The Critical Television Viewing Skills Project. We have developed a high school curriculum about television during the past year, and I'd like to begin by telling you about the history of this project.

#### 3. Red Book

In April of 1978, the U.S. Library of Congress and the U.S. Office of Education held a joint conference in Washington, DC to discuss Television, the Book, and the Classroom. Attending this conference were leading educators, broadcasters, librarians, and parents.

As a result of this conference, the U.S. Office of Education decided to fund four Critical Television Viewing Skills curriculum development projects to assist students to become more selective and discriminating viewers.

#### 4. 15,000 v. 11,000

The U.S. Office of Education thought it was important to develop these curricula for a number of reasons. For example, the average high school student will have spent 15,000 hours watching television by the time of high school graduation, compared to 11,000 hours in the classroom. Television, and other media that carry popular culture, are providing a "curriculum" that often runs counter to the curriculum taught in school, and a growing amount of research is showing us that television is a powerful teacher.

Another reason for developing these critical television viewing skills programs is to teach a basic competency in an era of competency-based education. Our statistics tell us that by age 65 the average American viewer will have spent 9 years watching TV. Equipped with the skills to understand TV's strengths and limitations, and to evaluate the content of TV programs, our students will be able to make effective and positive use of television throughout their lives.

And so, the U.S. Office of Education awarded contracts to four Critical Television Viewing Skills projects.

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## AUDIO

5. SEDL  
WNET  
FWL  
B.U.

The project for the elementary grades K-4 is located in Austin, Texas at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Public Television station WNET in New York is developing the middle school curriculum for grades 5-8. The high school curriculum project for grades 9-12 is located at Far West Laboratory in San Francisco (I'll describe this curriculum in more detail in a few minutes), and the post-secondary project is at the Boston University School of Public Communication.

6. K-4

The elementary curriculum consists of stories the children can read about a frog named Seemore who decides to see the world for himself instead of relying completely on TV for his information, a girl named Suzie who has many adventures as she learns about TV news, advertising messages, and the effects of TV on her life, and other characters including Jennifer Redbird, Tony, and Juana. Games, a TV viewing log, and classroom teaching ideas are also included in this curriculum.

7. 5-8

For middle school grades, a Television CritiKit has been developed which contains a variety of activities and assignments.

8. 9-12

We at Far West Laboratory chose to develop materials for the high school level. We have a textbook and teacher guide which will be available in February, 1980. We have gone through many titles, and our latest is "Inside Television: a Guide to Critical Viewing," which for now, we prefer over the one you see on the screen, "Television: the Way it Is." A manuscript of this textbook is on the resource table along with examples of the materials developed for elementary and middle school grades. You will have an opportunity to look at them during the coffee break. We have provided excerpts from the textbook in your workshop folders, and we will be referring to them later.

9. Post-secondary

The post-secondary materials are designed for college and adult education courses. The curriculum is divided into four modules dealing with Television Literacy, Persuasive, Entertainment, and Informational Programming.



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## 10. Cartoon- 2 teens

Our curriculum is geared toward the teenage audience, and there are some special concerns we face when dealing with this age group.

Teenagers watch less television than any other age group, younger or older. They are busy with outside activities and enjoy more mobility than younger students.

Their cognitive skills have reached an advanced level, so they are equipped to learn about television, visual literacy, and the effects of viewing in great depth.

And, in spite of the fact that they don't watch a great deal of TV now on the average, their viewing time will increase as they grow into young adulthood. As citizens and future parents, it is important for them to draw some conclusions about the role of TV in their lives.

## 11. Student Panel

In approaching the task of defining critical television viewing skills, Far West Laboratory began with a one-day meeting with a high school student panel.

## 12. Student Panel

The student panel consists of nine students from high schools in the San Francisco area.

## 13. Student Panel

They were selected to represent a variety of ages and backgrounds, and were recommended to us by their high school principals.

## 14. Student Panel

At this first meeting, the students watched two popular prime time shows, and discussed them in depth with the project staff.

## 15. Student Panel

Then, they told us what they felt were the most important things for high school students to know about television. These same students met again once we had developed the textbook, and evaluated it from their point of view.

## 16. Student Panel

They read through the textbook and did some of the assignments and activities. In this photo, you can see them on a tour of our local public television station, KQED.

## 17. Teacher Panel

Two weeks after the student panel met, we met with a panel of parents and teachers drawn from locations around the country, and four expert consultants. Also attending this curriculum Mini-Conference were:

## VISUAL

## AUDIO

## 18. WGBH

staff from the Radio and Television for Learning Office at public television station WGBH in Boston. WGBH was subcontracted to develop the high school curriculum materials based on the model created at Far West. WGBH was selected for this because they have developed high quality teacher guides to a variety of public television programs.

## 19. ETS

Staff from the Educational Testing Service also attended the Curriculum Mini-Conference. They were subcontracted by Far West Laboratory to field test and evaluate the curriculum materials.

## 20. Teacher Panel

Based upon the suggestions and discussion from the Curriculum Mini-Conference and the earlier student panel meeting, we established four major critical television viewing skills to be stressed in our curriculum materials. They are:

## 21. Ability to evaluate and manage one's own TV viewing behavior

The ability to evaluate and manage one's own television viewing behavior. For many people, television viewing occurs almost unconsciously rather than as a result of deliberate and active decision-making. Television becomes a kind of visual wallpaper that surrounds the viewer. We believe the discriminating TV viewer is one who chooses if, when, and what to watch based on personal interests and values. We believe high school students can learn to do this. It is important to help them develop strategies for decision-making about television.

## 22. Ability to question the reality of TV programs

Another critical television viewing skill we believe is important is the ability to question the reality of television programs. A television program is the result of a series of economic, technological, and production value decisions. We feel that students need to learn to question what they see on television in terms of why and how it got there. To develop this skill, students need to study the business of television, learn about the way programs are developed, written, and produced, and examine the images and messages which are presented. Armed with a sufficient knowledge base about the way television operates, and with practice in questioning what they see on television, students will learn that television's "reality" can indeed be questioned and examined.

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23. Ability to recognize the arguments employed on television and to counter-argue

A third critical television viewing skill is the ability to recognize the arguments commonly employed on television and the ability to counter-argue. Such arguments include both individual persuasive appeals used in 30-second commercials, and the subtle TV messages found in programs that model a narrow range of values, life styles, and problem-solving techniques. The use of violence to settle differences is a common example of this. Students can look at the logical structure of these arguments and their underlying assumptions. By examining the messages presented on television, students can identify persuasive techniques and their fallacies, analyze the values on which they are based, and clarify and defend their own values and opinions in relation to the television messages.

24. Ability to recognize the effects of television viewing on one's own life and the lives of others

There has been great public concern about the potential effects of television viewing. In this fourth skill, we concentrate on raising students' awareness of these effects which can be on use of leisure time, health, aggression, stereotyping, and the formation of personal goals, to name a few.

25. All 4 skills

So these are the four major skills we have chosen to develop in our high school curriculum called INSIDE TELEVISION: A GUIDE TO CRITICAL VIEWING.

In order to develop these skills, we believe students need to learn about:

26. Economics of television

the economics of television. This is an industry where every decision is a dollar decision. The economic structure of television has an impact on consumers' pocketbooks, on program quality and variety, and on our own ability to influence the medium. It is important that we recognize the primary goal of the commercial television industry: and that is to deliver the largest possible number of viewers to the sponsors. Television's clients are the sponsors, and we, the viewers, are television's product that is delivered to the sponsors in vast quantities every day.

27. How a television program is produced

People make television programs and every program must evolve from an idea through to a script to production and editing. By understanding the decisions made at each point in the process and the constraints



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## AUDIO

affecting these decisions, students will be able to assess television's reality and develop standards by which to judge program quality.

28. Bases of television regulation

The airwaves belong to the people, and television is an industry regulated by governmental agencies. Citizens can talk back to their television sets, but to do so they need to understand the legal bases for regulation, the public service obligations of the industry, and the mechanisms by which individuals and groups can actively influence the nature of television programming.

Certain key concepts governed the design of our high school curriculum about television. First, it is designed as a one semester elective course but with

29. Curriculum flexibility

enough flexibility in design that teachers can incorporate one or more units into their existing courses. Social Studies and Language Arts are the areas that are most directly related to this topic. In addition, the curriculum is designed to

30. Develop critical thinking skills

develop critical thinking skills in relation to television; to encourage students to form their own questions about television, find ways to locate information to answer these questions, and draw conclusions from that information.

We also feel it is important to use

31. Primary learning materials

primary learning materials such as real television scripts, storyboards, Nielsen Rating charts, and interviews with leading television professionals and critics.

32. Reinforcing basic skills

We also believe it is important to reinforce basic classroom skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening throughout the curriculum. Individual writing assignments, group projects, and graph interpretations are heavily featured in the course materials. We believe students' natural interest in television will encourage their willingness to develop these skills throughout the curriculum.

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33. Progressive Skills Building
- Critical television viewing skills are built progressively as the student proceeds through the curriculum. The final unit asks the students to compare their attitudes about television with those expressed at the beginning of the course, and for many, we expect a surprise is in store.
- 
34. Print-Based Curriculum
- And, the curriculum is entirely print-based. Teachers need purchase no fancy equipment to use INSIDE TELEVISION: A GUIDE TO CRITICAL VIEWING, and students are assigned to watch no particular programs nor any more television than they do in the course of their everyday lives. The teacher guide which accompanies this textbook recommends 16 mm films for each curriculum unit which reinforce or illustrate concepts presented in the course and which can be rented for a nominal fee. Their use, of course, is not required.
- 
35. Cartoon of teen watching TV
- Now that I've given you all this introduction, I'd like to tell you about the content of INSIDE TELEVISION: A GUIDE TO CRITICAL VIEWING. It is a student text consisting of seven units. Each unit contains expository written text, student learning activities, and supplementary readings which provide more detail about some concepts or provide a point of view expressed by a professional in the television industry. The first unit is:
- 
36. You and Television
- You and Television. It introduces television as a unique medium of communications with a special role in the lives of many American people. Students log their own television viewing behavior and compare them with national averages. Students also determine their own criteria by which to evaluate viewing patterns, taking into consideration television's characteristics and its influence on values and lifestyles.
- 
37. The Television Industry
- Unit 2, The Television Industry, looks at the business of television, its organization into networks and local stations, and the federal regulations on broadcasters. Television distribution is examined as a business which, from the start, was considered part of the American free enterprise system. This unit looks into program financing, sponsoring, and scheduling. In light of the power and profitability of the medium, the fierce competition for high ratings and control of the airwaves is documented.

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## 38. Programs and Production

In Programs and Production, students learn about the dramatic elements of television programs and the production techniques used to make them. Dramatic elements include plot construction, characterization, dialogue, and pacing; production techniques include camera shots, lighting, special effects, music track, and editing, to name a few. Students will learn how television programs are staged, and will develop an appreciation of the special aesthetic principles of television.

## 39. Selling

Selling, or advocacy programming, includes any television messages intended to persuade, such as commercials and political advertising. In Unit 4 students will learn to identify persuasive arguments and develop ways to counterargue and spot the fallacies which are often contained in commercial messages. This unit also looks at the impact of television on political campaigns and voting behavior, the role of the Federal Trade Commission in regulating advertising, and the effects of advertising on our buying behavior.

## 40. That's the Way It Is?

Unit 5 turns Walter Cronkite's news sign-off into a question, and examines television news and informational programming. It looks at the production techniques used in electronic journalism and the legal and social responsibilities of its creators. Americans rely on television news to a great extent for their information, and this unit discusses its power in our lives and its shortcomings as a source of information. Elements of television news are contrasted with print news, and varieties of documentary programming are described.

## 41. The Television Environment

This unit, The Television Environment, focuses on the nature of television content and the effects of that content on viewers. It compares the people, values, occupations, and lifestyles shown on TV with those that exist in the real world, with special attention given to TV stereotypes and TV values. Some common TV values are that violence resolves conflict, that good always subdues evil, and that youth and beauty are the pathways to happiness and success. Studies are cited that show that heavy television viewing has a significant effect on the way people regard the real world.

## 42. A Saving Radiance?

Unit 7 looks to the future of television and considers the impact of new technology on our television viewing. New developments such as home video systems, satellites, and video discs will decentralise the power of broadcasters and will offer a wider variety of programming choice.



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- | VISUAL                             | AUDIO                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 43. Teacher Guide                  | The teacher guide which accompanies the textbook has the following features:                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 44. Curriculum Goals               | It states the goals of each unit and describes the skills students will work on,                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 45. Student Learning Objectives    | it lists the student learning objectives of each unit,                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 46. Background Information         | it provides the teacher with background information and further resources in preparation for teaching each unit,                                                                                                                                                |
| 47. AV Resouces                    | it lists the audiovisual resources which may be used in conjunction with each unit, and are optional,                                                                                                                                                           |
| 48. Day by Day Lesson Plans        | it gives day by day lesson plans which may be adapted to meet each teacher's particular schedule,                                                                                                                                                               |
| 49. Reproducible Worksheet Masters | and, it contains a variety of worksheets which teachers may copy and can be used for individual and class activities in critical television viewing skills.                                                                                                     |
| 50. Teacher Panel                  | So, this is the curriculum that has been developed, starting with meetings of teachers and students. The textbook will be available by this February, and if you are interested in hearing more about it, please add your name and address to our mailing list. |
| 51. Cartoon                        | We hope it will help you teach your students to analyze what they see on television and to use television wisely. Thank you.                                                                                                                                    |